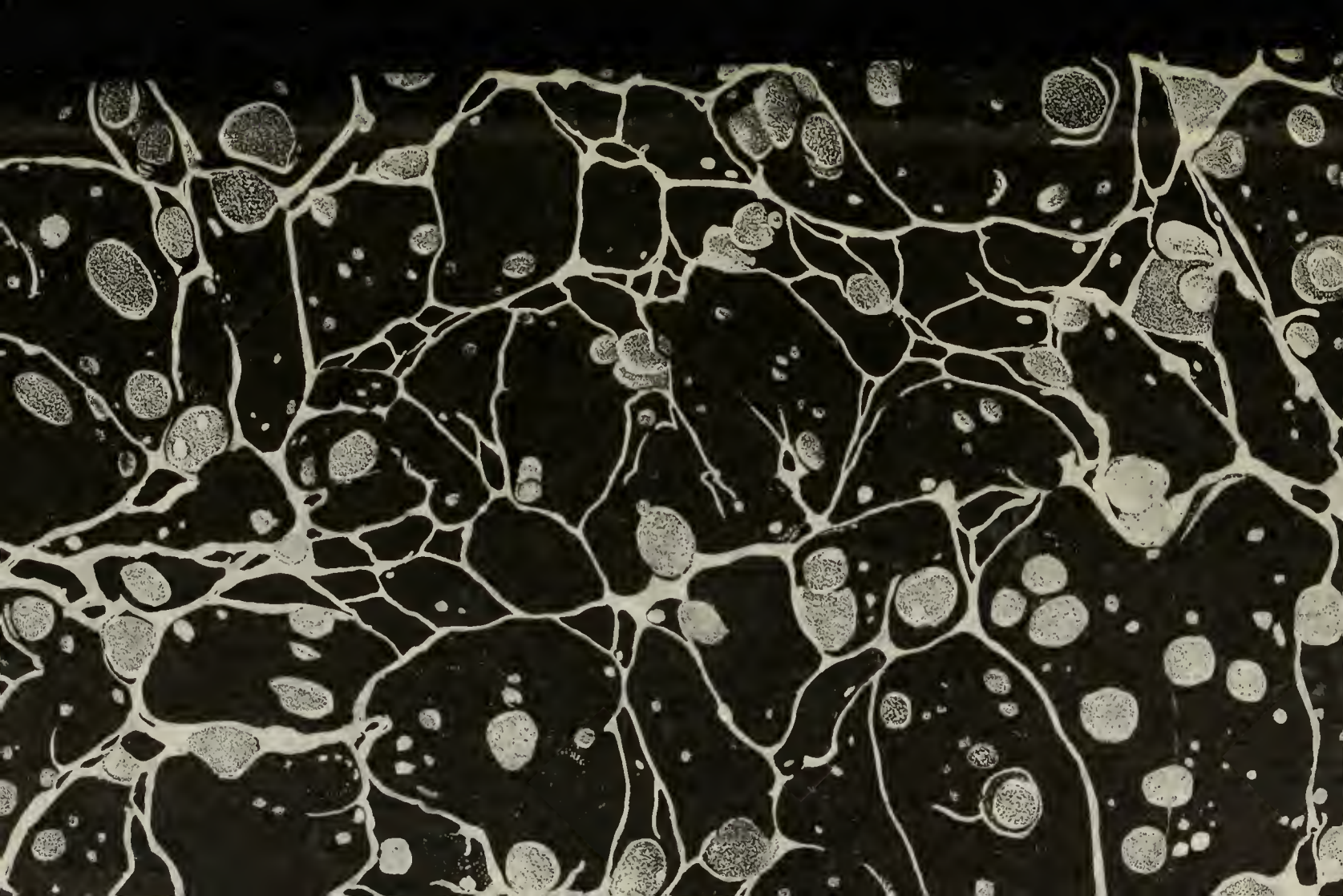

A

SKETCH

OF THE

POLITICAL STATE OF EUROPE,

AT THE

BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY,

1805.

By WILLIAM HUNTER, Esq.

AUTHOR OF THE

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AND OTHER POLITICAL TRACTS.

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A

SKETCH,

&c. &c.

EUROPE, in the whole courſe of its hiſtory, has not been placed in a more extraordinary or critical poſition than that which it actually preſents. Its firſt riſe, its overthrow, and its reeſtabliſhment; the gradual advances of the arts and ſciences towards perfection; their decay, and temporary loſs; their ſubſequent revival, and progreſſive improvement; have all been recorded and explained. Theſe various changes were produced, in the firſt inſtance, by the ſpontaneous exertions of the human mind; which, when not oppoſed by inſurmountable obſtacles, proceeds in the career of invention, diſcovery, and refinement: in the ſecond, by the ruinous influence of riches and luxury; which, in proportion as they were indulged in, rendered mankind unfit for defence againſt the attacks of a hardy and innumerable race of barbarians, who had been invited to the claim by the certainty of the poſſeſſion: in the third, by the kindling remains of former know-

ledge operating on the rude manners of the new ſettlers, reclaiming them by degrees from their uninformed modes of life, and imbuing them with a tincture of thoſe arts which were calculated to place an additional value on their acquiſitions.

Theſe cauſes and theſe effects are, however, ſufficiently apparent; and can be traced, with facility, through the entire range of their operations. Long before theſe ſavage hordes iſſued from their faſtneſſes in the north, the civilized parts of Europe had been rapidly declining in all thoſe virtues which had occaſioned their proſperity. Liberty had been ſupplanted by deſpotiſm; knowledge had been overwhelmed by ignorance. No impulſe of public energy or affection remained. Men no longer felt themſelves concerned for the preſervation of a government from which they derived no perſonal advantage; and which, whilſt it exiſted, only reproached them with degrading recollections of paſt times. The true principles of polity and juriſprudence were already abandoned. Political inſtitutions, which, among the ancients, had once been ſo keen an object of reſearch, had loſt all intereſt in the eyes of the multitude. Succeſsful uſurpation had ſtifled the voice of inquiry. The opulent were immerſed in the moſt effeminate luxuries; the poor were ſunk in the extremeſt

extremeſt indigence; a general diſſolution of manners and morals prevailed; and all thoſe objects which are moſt captivating and beneficial to a well-regulated ſociety were ſtripped of their attractions and their value.

After a lapſe of ages, Europe began to recover from the effects of its ſubjugation, and to aſſume a totally diſtinct character. The fierce maxims of its conquerors imperceptibly yielded to the inſinuating perſuaſion of a milder ſyſtem. The knowledge of the older inhabitants engrafted itſelf on the unpoliſhed manners and violent paſſions of its invaders; who, by degrees, perceived the utility, and ſubmitted to the operation, of many of their wiſer inſtitutions. The feudal ſyſtem, which had been founded by the northern conquerors, dividing the executive power among the landholders of a country, their turbulent and haughty ſpirit was perpetually involving them in petty wars. Out of theſe domeſtic broils aroſe the civil inſtitution of Knight-errantry;* whoſe generous object being to protect the perſecuted and defenceleſs, evidently tended to ſoften and reform the ferocious manners of the age. The expanſion of the Chriſtian religion was alſo producing moſt beneficial effects. It infuſed the

* Knight-errantry arose in Spain about the year 1072.

juſtice

juſtice and benignity of its precepts into the hardened and untutored heart; and created a love of equity, an obedience to law, and a temper of moderation. Even that powerful direction which it gave to the human mind when the population of Chriſtendom engaged in their military expeditions for the recovery of the Holy Land, although attended in many reſpects with the moſt diſaſtrous calamities,—yet, by uniting men in one common cauſe where the motive was glory, honour, and fame, in oppoſition to worldly intereſt, it diffuſed an heroic and ſocial ſpirit, and generated thoſe ſentiments of courteſy, magnanimity, and generous valour, for which that chivalrous age was ſo ſingularly conſpicuous. The cruſades were alſo productive of commercial effects which were highly advantageous to the induſtry and manners of thoſe times. They laid the foundation of the greatneſs of the Venetians, the Genoeſe, and the Piſans; whoſe flouriſhing trade to India through the ports of the Red Sea, reſtored to Europe the arts and luxuries of the Eaſt. Commercial communities, leagues, and corporations, were gradually formed, and gave birth to thoſe municipal regulations which afterwards ſo eſſentially aſſiſted in paving the way to civil liberty. The accidental diſcovery of the Pandects of Juſtinian about the ſame time, was another

another moſt fortunate event. They immediately engaged the eager attention of the learned. Juridical ſcience became a favourite ſtudy; and, in leſs than twenty years, public lectures on civil law were delivered at the chief univerſities of Europe.

The numerous corruptions, the ſuperſtition, and fanaticiſm, which were afterwards mingled with the diſpenſations of the Goſpel, and which had been ſo ſucceſsfully cultivated by the Church of Rome, were very near once more involving mankind in all their former miſery. The uſurpations of the prieſthood had, indeed, been long extending in every direction, and at laſt reached a moſt pernicious and alarming exceſs. In poſſeſſion of all the learning of the times, their artifices and frauds eaſily impoſed on the weakneſs and fears of an ignorant and credulous age. Their deſign was to exonerate the whole body of the clergy from the civil juriſdiction, and to eſtabliſh an irreſiſtible power on the ruins of regal rights. Gregory VII., and many of his ambitious ſucceſſors, iſſued their anathemas in the boldeſt language of denunciation and defiance. They provided ſanctuaries againſt the civil power. They excommunicated and depoſed princes at pleaſure; and the proudeſt potentates were frequently obliged to humiliate themſelves at the feet of theſe arrogant

prieſts. As, however, men became more enlightened, the odious vices, the groſs impoſtures, and the enormous abuſes, of the Church of Rome attracted their notice, and called forth the ſpirit of animadverſion and reformation. Wickliffe in England, and his diſciples John Huſs and Jerome of Prague in Bohemia, had the merit of taking the lead in this bold undertaking. At length aroſe Luther: whoſe daring genius and acute underſtanding ſo ſucceſsfully inveighed againſt the ſcandalous vices and uſurpations of the See of Rome, that he ſhook the whole fabric to its foundations; and, in leſs than thirty years, ſeparated the half of Chriſtendom from its ſpiritual dominion.

What had eminently conduced to this happy emancipation was the advancement of letters and the arts. Towards the end of the thirteenth century, a taſte for painting, architecture, and ſculpture, began to revive in Italy. Theſe purſuits gave an elegant turn to the occupations of the mind; and, in the ſucceeding century, to the ſucceſsful cultivation of higher attainments. The diſcovery of the properties of nitre had occaſioned a complete revolution in the military art; and the invention of paper and the mariner's compaſs, and laſtly of printing, ſecured the triumphs of the underſtanding. Civil and religious wars, and other public calamities,

nities, retarded the progreſs of theſe happy events; but they at length yielded to a more juſt and a more rational ſyſtem.

The diſcoveries of the fifteenth and ſixteenth centuries, by the Portugueſe and Spaniards, opened a vaſt field for ſpeculation.* They gave a freſh ſpur to the efforts of human induſtry, and the inquiries of the human underſtanding. Commerce, which, from its confined ſtate, had hardly attracted the notice of a warlike age, began to awaken the minds of princes to a perception of their true intereſts. Other ſources of power were diſcovered beſides thoſe of military force. The moſt fatal errors, both in government and religion, were gradually ſubſiding. A uſeful and modeſt deſire of inveſtigation was reclaiming the world from many of its groſſeſt abſurdities, and diffuſing through life a ſpirit of charity and toleration which was productive of the happieſt effects. More enlightened principles of policy aroſe, and governments were at length convinced that they could be more beneficially employed than in acts of war. The energies and induſtry of mankind kept pace; and, mutually aſſiſting each

* The diſcovery of the paſſage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, transferred the lucrative commerce of that productive country from the Arabs to the Europeans.

other, freſh objects of ſpeculation and inquiry, and unexplored ſources of proſperity and wealth, were continually expanding. The ſphere of exertion was extended to a new world. The treaſures and productions of the weſtern hemiſphere were transferred to Europe. What was at firſt a ſuperfluity, ſoon became a want; and theſe wants, being regularly ſupplied, were paid for by the productive labour of the countries to which they were ſent. Every ſtate of Europe felt the benefit of the change, and the improvement was regular and progreſſive.

About the middle of the ſeventeenth century, the advantage of thoſe maxims which had grown out of a more liberal ſyſtem of civil and commercial policy, had produced a deciſive effect. Europe, in the preceding century, had undergone a viſible change. In France and England, Francis and Henry, thoſe rival princes in gallantry, had introduced at their courts the female ſex; who, by a leſs reſtrained intercourſe with ſociety, poliſhed the manners, and gave to the ſofter paſſions a refinement and delicacy which had been before unfelt. In Italy, ſociety was in a high ſtate of perfection. It far outſtripped the other parts of Europe in elegant literature, and every work of taſte. Even the abſtruſeſt ſciences were cultivated with

with ſucceſs, and the ſyſtem of Copernicus was confirmed by the experiments of Galileo.

The polemical writers of the ſeventeenth century called forth all the intellectual vigour of the age; and ſpiritual deſpotiſm was at laſt ſubdued by religious toleration. Germany, which had been deſolated by a thirty years' war, was reſtored to tranquillity by the peace of Weſtphalia, which in a manner terminated the religious diſputes of Europe. From that epoch every benefit that could be expected to reſult from the experience and expanſion of the human mind, appeared to be approaching towards its conſummation. The tumults of war ſeemed to be at length yielding to the avocations of peace; the principles of internal legiſlation and federative union were better underſtood; controverſy was carried on leſs from the deſire of contention than the eagerneſs of inveſtigation, and the love of truth; and the prejudices between the inhabitants of different countries were giving way to a ſenſe of reciprocal advantage. A general good-will, obtaining among the individuals of different ſtates, was pointing out the modes of mutual aſſiſtance; and, whilſt it linked them in a cloſer union, was awakening them to the contemplation and purſuit of their genuine intereſts. The happineſs and virtue of mankind were increaſing with

their knowledge. Even war was diveſted of half its inconveniences and terrors. The public law of Europe had been gradually tending to perfection. The learning and diſcrimination of Grotius had produced their full effect. Preſcription had authorized maxims which were calculated to preſerve, in the midſt of the moſt furious hoſtility, many of the bleſſings of civilized life. Common conſent had erected a tribunal to which there was an appeal, and by which a rule of juſtice was preſerved amidſt the moſt violent extravagances of revenge. A priſoner was inveſted with certain civil rights; and a vanquiſhed enemy, who was entitled to the charity of a chriſtian, frequently experienced the ſolicitude of a friend. If death were inflicted, it was from neceſſity; and mercy, when ſhe could ſpare with ſafety, was ſure to interpoſe with ſucceſs. Law, in moſt inſtances, triumphed over force; and the greateſt miſeries and misfortunes of life were tempered by the dictates of humanity, the rules of juſtice, or the concluſions of reaſon.

Such was the promiſing ſtate of ſociety in Europe half a century ago: when a band of atheiſts, freethinkers, voluptuaries, and political enthuſiaſts, ſprang up, to produce a total change in public opinion; and, by their pernicious but alluring doctrines, to poiſon the affections, ſubvert

the

the judgment, ſhake the belief, and corrupt the morality, of mankind. Theſe dangerous but inſinuating opinions had been long ſecretly undermining the ſoundeſt principles and the wiſeſt inſtitutions. They ſtruck at the root of the oldeſt eſtabliſhed maxims, and were particularly levelled at ſubordination throughout every claſs of ſociety. The people were called upon every where to vindicate their natural rights. Ideas of equal power and equal property were induſtriouſly circulated; and were repreſented with all thoſe arts which were likely to impreſs, not only the juſtice, but the facility, of the acquiſition. The faſcinating nature of the aſſertion produced an inſtantaneous conviction on the ſanguine hopes of the multitude. They imagined that all theſe wild ſpeculations were to be carried into practical effect. Strongly as they were addreſſed to the ſenſes, and applying through the neareſt channels to the heart, they were adopted with that enthuſiaſtic zeal which a ſentiment of injury, added to a hope of revenge, is calculated to inſpire. All the wrongs which had been ſuffered, all the oppreſſion which had been endured, were to be inſtantly redreſſed; and thoſe who had been exerciſing the inſolence of pride, and the tyranny of power, were to be brought down to the common ſtandard.

It is not ſurpriſing that ſuch promiſes ſhould be readily

readily harboured in the breaſt. They produced the ſame effect on the moral world, which an infectious fever produces on the animal world, when the malignancy of the diſorder, being aſſiſted by the ſtate of the atmoſpheric air, becomes at once epidemic. The rapidity of the infection left no time for experiment; and, before the remedy could be prepared, the diſeaſe was incurable. No phrenzy ſince the cruſades has taken ſo faſt a poſſeſſion of the human mind. Deſtruction was the main purport; and the means recommended being phyſical ſtrength, the inſurrection was univerſal.

The advances which Europe had previouſly made, contributed, in one ſenſe, to its downfal. Men perceived advantages which they wiſhed to poſſeſs, and they imagined that the wiſh and the poſſeſſion were identified. The general diſſemination of knowledge; the claims of the governed on one ſide; the conceſſions of governments on the other; gave riſe to the moſt perilous diſcuſſions. Theſe diſpoſitions in oppoſing parties impreſſed the people with accurate notions of their power. The moment the idea was formed, they aimed at the realization; and that perfection which was placed in diſtant perſpective, they were determined at once to reach.

Theſe ſentiments, by anticipating the natural progreſs

progreſs of events, were calculated to confound the wiſeſt ſchemes, and to diſconcert the moſt ſalutary meaſures. But ſo it was. The previous ſyſtems of ſome of the leading powers of Europe had, indeed, very much conduced to diſpoſe mankind for the adoption of theſe dangerous and incongruous experiments. Their principles of polity had, in a few ſtriking inſtances, deviated from every rule of tolerance or juſtice. They had ſo frequently acted on that moſt atrocious of all maxims, that *power is right;* that a degree of diſguſt had been created, which rendered the feelings of mankind highly ſuſceptible of reſentment and greedy for revenge. The operation of partial laws and partial taxation; the domineering haughtineſs of the nobles; a total diſregard of the rights and comforts of the lower claſſes; irremediable confuſion in finance; an idea of ſecurity at home, reſulting from a conviction in the ſtrength of long practiſed and unreſiſted abuſes; the violence and oppreſſion which were extended to foreign ſtates; theſe various miſdeeds had gradually opened the eyes, even of the unreflecting, to the views of ſovereigns, and, in a few glaring inſtances, had drawn aſide the veil which conceals the occult operations of cabinets. Their foibles, their meanneſſes, and their vices,

vices, were betrayed to the groſs perceptions of the vulgar. Men began to argue, not only from ſpeculation, but from what was an object of ſenſe, and to diſcover that rank alone does not confer either intelligence or virtue. In many countries, whilſt the great were ſecure in their privileges, the purſes of the people had been drained, not for the promotion of national advantage, but for the proſecution of injurious ambition or private revenge, or in the maintenance of idle luxury and vitious diſſipation. The inſolence of power rioted in the violation of law, and the ſplendour of a court was paramount to the happineſs of a people.

The aſſiſtance which France impoliticly gave to rebellious America, accelerated her own downfall. The ſeeds of inſurrection which were there ſo ſucceſsfully cultivated, were, on the return of peace, tranſplanted to a more luxuriant ſoil. That ſame temper, inſtigated by other circumſtances, diſplayed itſelf among her own people, and at length convinced the government of the fooliſh eagerneſs with which it had embarked in that deſperate though ſucceſsful conteſt. America gained her independence: France loſt her crown; and not only involved herſelf, but a great part of Europe, in ſcenes of miſery and deſolation, which, after a ſucceſſion of ſixteen years, are

are ſtill, I fear, diſtantly removed from their termination.

The object of France was the deſtruction of Britain. But ſo ſhort-ſighted were her politicians, that, although they ſucceeded in the immediate plan of their operations, the reſult has turned out, ruin to her, and increaſed proſperity to us. The ſeparation of America from this country may be conſidered as the epoch of our greatneſs. It relieved us from a dead weight which cramped all our energies, and impeded all our exertions. We eſcaped the territorial expence, and ſecured the commercial benefits. Freed from the burden and the anxiety occaſioned by thoſe vaſt colonies, that attention and wealth which they required were thrown into more productive channels, and, enabling us to turn our views to more valuable conſiderations, we availed ourſelves of our intrinſic advantages.

A revolution in another part of Europe, which had been alſo long preparing, and was deeply concerted, excited, at the time, as much aſtoniſhment, and more indignation than that which was drawing towards its accompliſhment in France. Whilſt the French had been breaking their chains from falſe notions of freedom, three of the leading ſovereigns of Europe had been ſtrengthening their power by purſuing a more guilty, becauſe a more

matured and leſs hazardous courſe. That ſcandalous league, which, at the inſtigation of Ruſſia, had been formed to deprive an ancient and reſpectable kingdom of its exiſtence, from no other motive but the love of dominion, backed by ſtrength, and oppoſed by weakneſs, was an event which, by being arranged with ſo much ſecrecy, and accompliſhed with ſo much facility, proved the depravity of cabinets, and the flexible degeneracy of the age. To ſave Poland no effort was made. One man, indeed, whoſe name has been immortalized by the ſplendour of the attempt, though deficient in thoſe commanding talents which were likely to inſure ſucceſs, did, for a moment, rally the broken and aſtoniſhed ſpirits of his countrymen. But the memory of Koſciuſko was doomed to ſurvive the independence of his country. Without union at home, or political influence abroad, it was totally unable to ſtem the torrent that aſſailed it. Ruſſia, Auſtria, and Pruſſia, ſuddenly developed their views, and, attacking it at the ſame moment at various points, it was at once proſtrate at their feet. Thus was one of the oldeſt kingdoms of Europe, without a ſtruggle, expunged from its map, and its political exiſtence completely extinguiſhed. This indefenſible act of partition will, however, as long as hiſtorical juſtice dares blame tyrannical perfidy, be arraigned.

They

They have loſt, in the opinion of the world, more, perhaps, than they have gained in territory; and, as *opinion* is frequently *power*, it is very poſſible that they may one day have to repent this groſs violation of every maxim of moral or political juſtice. Such acts live long in the feelings of a people.

Much as Joſeph II. had reſiſted the invitation to become a party to the diviſion of Poland, having ſo eaſily ſucceeded, he moſt readily entered into a ſecond plan with Ruſſia, for the diſmemberment of Turkey. This would alſo have been accompliſhed, had not the jealouſy of England, Pruſſia, and Sweden, interpoſed. But ſo ſucceſsfully did this federation operate againſt the views of the two imperial houſes, that they were not only compelled to deſiſt from the completion of their project, but to reſtore the conqueſts which they had made. Joſeph delivered up every thing: Catharine retained Oczakow.

The downfall of the moſt ancient monarchy in Europe, which had, for near fourteen hundred years, acted a conſpicuous part under an illuſtrious line of princes, and which, for near eight hundred years, in one dynaſty, had been tranſmitted in regular and almoſt undiſturbed ſucceſſion, was deſtined ſpeedily to enſue theſe plots of ſovereigns. The French revolution, as I have already obſerved, had been long preparing, but the ſhock came before

it was expected. Voltaire, Rouſſeau, d'Alembert, and a few others of the leading lights of the new philoſophy, had been, for thirty years before it happened, moſt induſtriouſly employed. They were the chief pioneers, who, with the inſtruments of infidelity, ridicule, and falſe eloquence, had been carrying on their miſchievous deſigns, and had too ſucceſsfully ſtriven to undermine religious faith, moral rectitude, and political and civil ſubordination. They ſeemed to move all former maxims from their centre; to diſturb the very conſtitution of nature. The confuſion of chaos appeared to be again reſtored, and every thing to reſolve itſelf into its elementary principles. It is not however my buſineſs to trace here, even an outline of that dreadful convulſion which is ſtill freſh in our minds, and which, in its fatal progreſs, has been productive of a greater intenſity and variety of miſery than was ever before inflicted by the hand of man on ſuffering humanity. I ſhall not dwell on this afflicting ſubject, but proceed to the main purport of this work, and endeavour to trace a ſhort, but I hope diſtinct, ſketch of the political ſituation, and probable views, of the chief ſtates of Europe.

I ſhall begin with the German ſtates, and proceed in regular progreſſion, as they preſent themſelves according to their different ranks.

Among

Among theſe, Auſtria ſtill poſſeſſes the ſuperiority. How long ſhe may retain it, muſt depend entirely on her own conduct, and the political connexions which ſhe may form. The ancient federative ſyſtem of Europe, which watched with ſuch a jealous eye over the political balance, has been totally diſſolved by the French revolution. In former times, when France paſſed her boundaries, the intervention of Auſtria, or Pruſſia, or England, could oblige her to return. But theſe wiſe maxims, which ſo long preſerved the equilibrium, have been incautiouſly abandoned, and powerful muſt now be the union which ſhall be able to reſtore it.

Though others have failed in their duty, Auſtria has hitherto ſuſtained a great part. That which is to come (for the ſcene is not yet over) may be more eventful as circumſtances may ariſe, and ſhe may be a chief inſtrument in reſcuing Europe from her degradation, or in ſealing her ſlavery and her ſhame.

It appears to be a notion ſtrongly prevalent in this country, that Auſtria, diſguſted with her bad ſucceſs, and exhauſted by the efforts which ſhe has already put forth, will relinquiſh her former views, and yield to the preponderating influence of France. Such a meaſure, if adopted, would give a fatal blow to her power, and, finally, to her independence. The enmity of France may be alarming; but her

her friendſhip is mortal. Whilſt ſhe is an enemy, we are at leaſt prepared to counteract her, by knowing what we have to expect. But, unreſtrained as ſhe is in her conduct towards others, by any principle of juſtice or good faith, an alliance is the inevitable forerunner of ruin. Whilſt her profeſſions are lulling ſuſpicion, or diſavowing activity, ſhe purſues her plans without interruption or riſk; and, when we are leaſt aware of our impotency, we find ourſelves enthralled. The ſuppoſition, that things which have come to paſs could never have happened, has already enſlaved a great portion of Europe.

I cannot, however, bring myſelf to believe that Auſtria, after the experience which ſhe has had, will ſubſcribe to ſuch an extreme act of folly. Although ſhe may, for the preſent, be deſirous of ſtanding aloof from action till ſhe has, in ſome degree, repaired her finances, and recruited her ſtrength, ſhe ſurely will never allow herſelf to depart ſo totally from all prudence and all ſafety as to form an alliance with France. There is, indeed, but one ground of conjecture on which ſuch a ſuppoſition can reſt, which is, the rooted jealouſy that ſubſiſts between the houſes of Auſtria and Brandenburgh; a feeling which aroſe out of the mutual injuries of the ſeven years war, and which the long period of time, that has ſince elapſed, has not been

able

able to moderate. That this enmity, founded on rivalſhip and jealouſy of preponderance, ſhould have prevailed in its fulleſt extent, whilſt theſe two powers were waging a fierce war, which was aggravated by every ſenſe of injury and motive of revenge, was a natural conſequence: that it ſhould have continued to exiſt from the mere recollection of theſe events working on national feelings, whilſt the dominion of France was confined within its ancient limits, and they had little to apprehend but from the exertions of each other, is alſo eaſy to conceive: but that it ſhould ſtill operate, in all its force, after it was morally certain, that the increaſed means of a common enemy were aiming to accompliſh their mutual deſtruction, and that ſo dire a misfortune was only to be averted by a reſolute and prompt determination to unite in reſiſtance, is a conduct which muſt be allowed to be at complete variance with every principle of wiſdom, prudence, or ſafety.

This illiberal ſenſe of wrong and feeling of reſentment have hitherto triumphed over every prudential arrangement. They have been carried to an abſurd length, and have been attended with conſequences which have gone nigh to ſubvert the religion, the public law, and even the oldeſt thrones of Chriſtendom. It is, however, to be hoped, that theſe deſtructive diſſenſions will, before

fore it is too late, yield to a ſenſe of common ſafety; and that ſuch puerile motives of alienation will give way to more powerful calls. France, indeed, is now become an armed nation, a complete military power, whoſe political exiſtence depends on the ſucceſs of her arms. She attacks all her neighbours by turns, and maintains her uſurpations by the contributions which ſhe exacts. What then but a general league can effectually repel and confine theſe irruptions, which threaten by turns the exiſtence of every continental government.

Auſtria, although ſhe, in many reſpects, ſuffered very ſeriouſly during her late conteſt with France, alſo evinced her ability to contend; ſince, after maintaining her ground for eight years with varied ſucceſs, it was one fatal and unaccountable battle, loſt by caſualty, after it had been gained by blows, which drove her from the field.

The battle of Marengo, both as it ſtands alone, and in its conſequences, is certainly one of the moſt extraordinary occurrences in hiſtory. After a long and deſperate ſtruggle, the main army of the French was totally defeated, and Bonaparte, who commanded on that occaſion, had actually ſealed his diſpatch, which contained the news of his overthrow. The Auſtrians were, in full ſecurity, repoſing on the field of contention from the

fatigues

fatigues of ſlaughter, and contemplating the laurels of victory. At this moment Deſſaix, by a forced march, arrived with a body of 10,000 men. Without ſuffering his ſoldiers to halt, he renewed the conflict, and the wreath was torn from the victor's brow. The Auſtrians were panic ſtruck; they fled in every direction, or laid down their arms; and ſubmitted to be conducted as priſoners by thoſe very ſoldiers whom they had, a few hours before, vanquiſhed. Deſſaix fell, like Wolfe, in the very lap of victory, and like Wolfe, the knowledge of his ſucceſs diveſted of its poignancy the blow which terminated his exiſtence. Bonaparte ſurvived to reap the benefits of this ſudden turn of fortune. The Auſtrians ſurrendered their conqueſts with a rapidity which has no parallel in the modern hiſtory of Europe; and, after having recovered from France, in *ſix months*, what France had gained, in thoſe quarters, in *ſix years*, they may be ſaid to have loſt it back in *one day*. The peace between the two powers, which followed ſhortly after, was the conſequence of this ſignal defeat.

That accommodation, however, is declaratory of the opinion which France had formed, as well as Auſtria herſelf, of the remaining energies of that powerful ſtate. It ſhews that they were both aware that ſhe was far from being ſubdued; but that ſhe had a warlike people and immenſe

reſources ſtill in reſerve. It proved, on the part of Auſtria, that, after a long and violent ſtruggle, in which many diſtricts of her dominion had been materially injured, ſhe judged it prudent to yield to the wiſhes of a loyal people who were deſirous of peace. It proved, on the part of France, her readineſs of availing herſelf of her temporary ſucceſs, and of concluding, on favourable terms, a conteſt from which ſhe had ſeverely ſuffered. It alſo proved her fear of uniting, and exaſperating, the ſcattered opinions of the Emperor's ſubjects, by puſhing them to extremities; and, above all, her eagerneſs to be releaſed from oppoſition and embarraſſment on the continent, that ſhe might concentrate her ſtrength, and purſue, with better hope of ſucceſs, her implacable hatred to Britain.

Since this period, however, circumſtances have undergone a moſt material alteration. England continues as ſhe was, ſcorning the threats of her antagoniſt, and repoſing, with confident ſecurity, under the ſhield of freedom, on the unſhaken foundations of public and private virtue. But France is become to the continent a much more dangerous foe. The ſame inclination to deſtroy the independence of Europe that ever exiſted ſtill exiſts: her means are alarmingly increaſed. Thoſe means, potent as they are, may be ſtill defeated by active and well judged meaſures; but woe to the continent,

nent, if it do not ſoon ſhake off its ſlumbers, and concert ſome ſcheme of common defence, worthy of the prize which may be forfeited or ſecured!

Auſtria, although ſhe was humiliated, was not eſſentially weakened, in point of phyſical ſtrength or geographical poſition, by the events of the laſt war. The Low Countries, it is true, were ſevered from her domination; but it muſt at the ſame time be recollected, that, whilſt they acknowledged her ſovereignty, they were a perpetual ſource of uneaſineſs, and a frequent cauſe of contention, which tended not only to diſturb the councils, but to conſume the ſtrength, of their poſſeſſor. The reforming hand of Joſeph had occaſioned a complete alienation of the affections of his ſubjects in that quarter, which no ſubſequent meaſures of conciliation could remove. The diſtance alſo which ſeparated them from the other hereditary dominions of the emperor, rendered the adminiſtration of them more expenſive, more precarious, and leſs uſeful. Theſe, with his former Italian dominions, he has loſt; but he has received in exchange a country, which, if properly managed, is likely to turn to a more profitable account.

By the acceſſion of the Venetian territory, whilſt his dominions are nearly as extenſive, they are more compact, which is a conſideration of no

ſmall importance. The fertility, population, and induſtry of the Low Countries were, no doubt, very conſpicuous; but they were ſo frequently ruined by the operations of hoſtile armies, and their diſaffection to the Emperor's government was ſo unequivocal, that it becomes a very dubious point whether he was either enriched or ſtrengthened by the inheritance.* But the Venetian territory, diſencumbered of theſe manifeſt drawbacks, is likely to yield conſiderable advan-

* I am only here arguing againſt the value of the Netherlands, as the Emperor is perſonally concerned as ſovereign of his hereditary ſtates, not at all wiſhing to diminiſh their importance as a rampart for the protection of the north of Germany. They have always been conſidered, and have always proved, a very uſeful barrier againſt the invaſion of Germany by France. Whilſt the French armies were employed in ſubduing them, which generally coſt them one or two campaigns, the ſtates of Germany had time to aſſemble their troops, and concert their plans of operation. In the hands of the King of Pruſſia, both in his individual capacity and as a member of the empire, they would be a moſt valuable acquiſition. In the hands of France, they are a moſt perilous one. Germany is, indeed, at preſent completely expoſed to the deſigns of its aspiring neighbour. The whole line of frontier, which was formerly its ſecurity, is quite broken down. The Low Countries, Holland, the tract of land between the Rhine and the ancient boundary of France, with Switzerland, have all fallen before the fortunes of France. The keys of Italy ſhe alſo holds.

tages.

tages. He is now in poſſeſſion of a ſtate, which, ſtanding alone, has made an illuſtrious figure in arms, in commerce, and in arts; and, although its former ſplendour can never be revived, its reſources are ſtill abundant, and may be again called forth with profitable effect. He has alſo acquired a maritime poſition,* which, as an outlet to the numerous productions of his hereditary dominions, by extending his commercial intercourſe and means, may be an important ſource of future revenue and ſtrength.

Auſtria, ſince the peace, has been active in internal arrangements, and has been carefully treaſuring up the means of future annoyance. The minute and ſteady attention which has been lately beſtowed on the organization of the troops, the regulation of the finances, and the improvement of the revenue by the impoſition of judicious taxes, has helped to remove many great obſtacles which before ſhackled her efforts, and has placed her in a progreſſive ſtate of preparation for the renewal of hoſtilities. One alteration alſo in the adminiſtration of her government, from which, in any future conteſt, ſhe will derive an incalculable advantage, is the ſuppreſſion of the Aulic

† Auſtria has already a few frigates, and a fleet of corvettes, mounting from twelve to eighteen guns.

council

council of war, by whoſe impolitic interference all the operations of her generals, in former times, were ſeriouſly impeded. It was indeed the abſurd powers entruſted to this body which, in many inſtances, were the viſible cauſe of thoſe reverſes which attended the Auſtrian arms. The wiſdom of councils may ſtill repair her misfortunes. The Archduke Charles, one of the greateſt heroes and acuteſt minds of the age, has now acquired a complete aſcendancy. The faction, which, for ſo long a time, ſucceſsfully oppoſed him, and thwarted all his deſigns, has been diſperſed: and as no man better underſtands the intereſts of his country, or is likely to be more zealous in promoting them, it is not to be ſuppoſed that he can feel any diſpoſition to form a cloſe connexion with the government of France. From ſuch a connexion his generous and gallant ſpirit muſt naturally revolt, as well from the recollection of paſt injuries as the apprehenſion of immediate and remote conſequences.

The Emperor's aſſumption of his *new* title is a puerile piece of parade, which might as well have been let alone, of little conſequence to himſelf, of no conſequence to any one elſe. But if he be deſirous of preſerving his *old* title, and the real ſplendour and dignity, and high rank, which are attached to it, and which are conſecrated by the

revolution

revolution of ages, there is apparently but one poſſible mode of inſuring ſucceſs—that is, moſt cautiouſly to avoid any intimate intercourſe with France; to preſerve, with firmneſs and moderation, his remaining rights; to reſiſt, in the outſet, every encroachment or inſult; and to embrace the firſt favourable opportunity of reducing the power of a reſtleſs and intolerant neighbour, and of retaliating the wrongs which he has already endured.

Auſtria, although ſhe have ſenſibly declined in conſequence, yet from the extent, population, and fertility of her hereditary dominions, ſhe ſtill poſſeſſes that weight which muſt ever command a preponderating influence in the affairs of Germany. The natural and artificial ſtrength of the country; the number, diſcipline, and gallantry of the troops; the riches, variety, and fruitfulneſs of the ſoil; the induſtry and ſobriety of the inhabitants; and, above all, their attachment to their rulers: all combine to uphold this truly imperial houſe. If it make a proper and politic uſe of the means with which Providence has entruſted it, it may ſtill triumph over the new dynaſty. If it fall, it muſt conſpire againſt its own exiſtence; or, if not a principal, muſt at leaſt be an acceſſary to the crime. Moſt active and ſtrenuous ought it therefore to be in curbing the

power

power of France, which can only be effectually done by a reſtoration of the federal union of Europe.

The policy which Pruſſia is bound to purſue is fully as evident; and although ſhe has, for many years paſt, been eſtranged from her true intereſts, it is natural to ſuppoſe, as the deſigns and diſpoſitions of France become more palpable, that ſhe will at laſt adopt that line of conduct which can alone impart efficacy to her ſtrength, or ſtability to her independence. Pruſſia has, hitherto, fallen into a moſt fatal miſtake; and to her blind and narrow views are to be attributed moſt of the diſaſters which, for the laſt fifteen years, have afflicted and deſolated Europe. Had ſhe been faithful to her alliances, the arrogance of France would have been long ſince chaſtiſed, and her power repreſſed: and Europe, inſtead of being at the outſet of another war, might have been promoting the happineſs of her inhabitants in the boſom of tranquillity. The line of conduct which it behoved Pruſſia to perſiſt in, at the breaking out of the French revolution, had ſhe conſulted her dignity, her welfare, or her fame, never, in my mind, admitted of a queſtion. It was, I thought, moſt diſtinctly defined; but whatever doubts the circumſtances of thoſe times might have occaſioned, they muſt be totally diſſipated now.

Pruſſia,

Pruſſia, at the commencement of the laſt century, compared with its preſent greatneſs, was a puny ſtate. Her aggrandiſement was the work of one man. The ſplendid talents of Frederic the IId. raiſed her, in one reign, from the rank of a ſecondary to a firſt rate power. The ſafety of Germany and the peace of Europe ſeemed to require the change. An equipoiſe was created in the north of Germany, capable of curbing the ſuperiority of Auſtria in the ſouth. In another point of view, Pruſſia formed a kind of balance between Auſtria, Ruſſia, and France, and, according to the deſigns of either of theſe kingdoms, could throw the weight of her power and influence into the oppoſite ſcale.

The great Frederic, after reſcuing his hereditary dominions from deſtruction, ſtrengthened them by valuable acquiſitions. He proved the reſources of his mind both as a ſoldier and a ſtateſman, not only by the defeat of a moſt powerful combination, but by a formal and final annexation of conquered territory. The fortune of war was ſucceeded by a long peace, during which his philoſophic mind was unremittingly occupied in developing the character, and calling forth the reſources, of his newly acquired ſtates. At the cloſe of his illuſtrious reign, his kingdom was in full poſſeſſion of all the glory, reſpect, and ſtrength,

which aroſe out of the variety, magnitude, and fortunate iſſue of his ſplendid achievements. Theſe advantages went on improving till the epoch of the French revolution, at which time the grandeur of Pruſſia ſeemed to be conſummated, and every ſtate was looking up to her as the arbiter of Europe.

Few countries have been placed in ſo favourable a poſition for perpetuating their own glory, and conferring laſting beneſits on the human race, as was at the diſpoſal of Pruſſia when that unfortunate rebellion firſt broke out. It recurred, indeed, over and over again, in the courſe of the ſucceeding war; and why ſhe neglected to avail herſelf of her high fortune will ever ſet at defiance the moſt natural concluſions of reaſon. She might not only have redeemed Holland, without riſk, from the hands of the French; but, by giving a deciſive check in other parts to the republican arms, ſhe might have put an effectual end to that growing vigour at which ſhe muſt at this moment ſecretly tremble. It is true that ſhe has remained at peace, and has added to her dominions and her treaſure. But are thoſe ſoldiers, whom ſhe has been obliged to ſupport, ſo able, or ſo willing, to contend againſt the power of France as they were ten years back; and cannot thoſe very dominions which France has procured for her, if unaſſiſted

by

by other powers, be wreſted from her, with the ſame facility, by France.

The ſtrength of a country does not always increaſe with extenſion of territory. When it does not feel itſelf equal to the defence of its own independence, it ſignifies little what it poſſeſſes. Pruſſia, a few years back, might have commanded her own terms. She is now, in a great degree, at the mercy of France. France may have been inſtrumental in procuring her nominal advantages, but ſhe has been ſapping the foundations of her real grandeur. With ſo many cogent motives of active interference which have preſented themſelves to Pruſſia for many years back, one is at a loſs to account for her total inaction. It is an aberration from ſound policy for which we ſhall in vain endeavour to find even a plauſible excuſe. We can only, I fear, attribute it to a ſordid love of money, a ruinous luſt of empire, a narrow jealouſy of a once rival ſtate, or an inglorious deſire of repoſe: or elſe to an unworthy ambition of acquiring territory of which the legal poſſeſſors were ſcandalouſly deſpoiled, and which ſhe could only have obtained by condeſcending to be the abject inſtrument of a government which ſhe muſt abhor. The Pruſſians have, however, been juſtly diſappointed in their views, and they muſt now be convinced

that they have been contributing to the elevation of a moſt formidable neighbour, whoſe deſign is eventually to ſacrifice them with the reſt of Europe. The republican rage has, in the mean time, been brought to a cloſe; but its power remains; and, by being concentrated in one man, is proportionably to be dreaded. France is now where it was the ambition of Louis the XIVth to place her. She has broken down all the old fences which confined her, and is graſping, with ſome hope of ſucceſs, at univerſal empire.*

What has happened in France, reſpecting the late change in its government, might have been eaſily foreſeen. It has been the natural termination of its popular exceſſes. The French, in the very outſet of their revolution, demonſtrated the abſolute neceſſity of reſtraint. They proved that they had not attained that degree of civilization which is compatible with the enjoyment of liberty, and which renders men capable of living under a free government. The advantages of the people were ſoon diſmiſſed from the thoughts of the ruling departments of the ſtate, and a conteſt for ſuperiority among factions was all that remained. In this fluctuating ſtate of things, it was very apparent that ſtruggles would be endleſs, till

* Prussia, after all, can never suffer Holland to be definitively annexed to France. It is the chief protection of the north of Germany.

ſome one aroſe whoſe fortune, whoſe genius, or whoſe power, was ſufficient to ſilence the claims, and ſuppreſs the exertions, of his competitors. This change could be nothing leſs than the re-eſtabliſhment of irreſiſtible deſpotiſm. It was alſo very evident that France, in her revolutionary ſtate, and cut off as ſhe was from all thoſe regular ſupplies which, under the old conſtitution, poured in from the flouriſhing condition of her manufactures, and of her foreign and colonial trade, could not maintain her numerous armies, and provide for the enormous exigencies of her government, but by forced loans and ruinous impoſts at home, and the plunder of contiguous ſtates. In this manner has ſhe been proceeding for the laſt fifteen years, and as one country has been exhauſted, another has become her prey. Friend or foe has been treated with the ſame inexorable rigour. Where the power of exaction has exiſted, there alſo has been the inclination; and no ſpot, which has allured by its abundance or weakneſs, has been ſpared by the claims of juſtice or the petitions of humility.

Theſe ſyſtematic and unprovoked acts of aggreſſion would have been ſufficient, one ſhould have imagined, in their infancy, to have awakened the fears of independent ſtates, and aroufed the determination of vigorous reſiſtance. But, no! they

they thought it more prudent to ſubmit without contention, than to incur the riſk of being compelled to ſubmit after contention. When great efforts are requiſite, we are apt to poſtpone them, and to leave things to chance. Thus did this unmanly and ſluggiſh feeling prevail; and ſo far from having diſarmed any powers of deſtruction, they have added to thoſe which previouſly exiſted, that of contempt.

France has all along betrayed her intermediate intentions, and her ultimate deſigns. She now acts even a leſs myſterious part, and, from a greater ſenſe of ſecurity, proclaims to the world the full ſcope of her ambition. This may be ſtill reſiſted; but, if deferred much longer, reſiſtance may be vain. The military ſtrength of France continues to increaſe, and ſeems to identify itſelf, more and more every day, with her political exiſtence. Her naval and commercial conſequence being loſt, the application of her means is directed to that one point. But that a power may be more eaſily repelled when weak and disjointed, than when firm and conſolidated, requires no ingenuity of reaſoning to prove; and why Pruſſia did not rather take advantage of her deciſive ſuperiority at a former period, than wait till the moment when the efficacy of her interference is rendered problematical, is one of thoſe occurrences in politics which

which it is difficult to account for. If the King of Pruſſia had not, in the firſt inſtance, withdrawn from his alliance againſt France ; or if he had, in the year 1799, aſſiſted our troops with twenty thouſand men in Holland ; or if, at a ſubſequent period, he had added his weight in Italy to that of Auſtria and Ruſſia, what innumerable evils might have been averted! That horrible revolution, which no man of feeling can contemplate without execration, might, at any one of theſe junctures, have been cruſhed ; and thoſe countries which have been ſince overwhelmed with every kind and degree of miſery, might have been ſpared. What is ſtill, perhaps, of greater conſequence, the example of ſucceſsful uſurpation and wickedneſs which has been held up to the world, would never have exiſted, and mankind would have continued to advance in every kind of knowledge but that of crimes. Europe would alſo have eſcaped her preſent painful ſituation, and not have been ſhuddering from a dread of the failure of thoſe means on which, at preſent, her very ſalvation hinges. The overbearing inſolence and rapacity of Bonaparte do, however, apparently begin to operate on the fears of the leading powers, and the palpable conviction of increaſing danger prevailing over leſs urgent conſiderations,

ſiderations, their enmities may at length yield to more imperious motives.

The arreſt of Sir Thomas Rumbold, an accredited Miniſter, clothed with the ſacred rights and privileges of his character, reſiding in a foreign ſtate, and under the protection of a foreign court, is an event which, from its immediate conſtruction, and conſequent application, has ſtartled the whole civilized world. It is one of thoſe tranſactions by which every independent ſtate muſt feel itſelf injured, and in which every independent ſtate muſt be equally concerned. It is, in every point of view, one of the moſt atrocious and impudent acts that was ever avowedly committed by a government, and, aiming as it does at the very foundation of the public law of Europe, unleſs full reparation be required, and obtained, no peaceable intercourſe between ſtates can be, with ſafety, in future carried on. If the perſon of an Ambaſſador be no longer held inviolable; if he be liable to ſeizure and impriſonment, not only from the ſtate where he is reſident, but from the forcible interference of neighbouring powers; one hardly knows how any amicable communication between governments can exiſt, or, when differences ariſe, how harmony can be reſtored. That part of the public law of Europe which relates to diplomatic proceedings, and which has ſo materially conduced to moderate the paſſions, diminiſh

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the enmities, and aſſimilate the intereſts of nations, would inſtantly terminate. War, which could ſcarcely ever be obviated, muſt be conducted with ſavage and implacable ferocity. There would be an end of all truce. No treaty could interpoſe. The ſword would be the only tribunal to appeal to, and the triumph of the conqueror would be the extermination of his opponents. Antient hiſtory furniſhes a few precedents of ſuch tranſactions; but in the records of modern times, no ſuch example is to be found.* The King of Pruſſia, under whoſe protection Sir Thomas Rumbold, as Miniſter to the Circle of Lower Saxony, was placed, has indeed felt his dignity offended by this glaring violation of diplomatic rights, and has, in ſome meaſure, reſented the affront. He diſpatched,

* I recollect one instance, which is peculiarly in point. When the Lacedæmonians, in the second year of the Peloponnesian war, sent an embassy to the King of Persia, the Ambassador, whilst in neutral territory, was seized by a party of Athenians sent for the express purpose, conveyed to Athens, and put to death. The Athenians, however, alleged in defence of such barbarous proceedings, that the Lacedæmonians had, the year before, forcibly seized and murdered some of their merchants. Bonaparte seems to have been guided by a similar pretended spirit of retaliation, though even without the same grounds to support him. At some future period, he may give a stronger authority to the precedent, by fulfilling the latter part of it.

as it may be believed, a ſpirited memorial to the Cabinet of St. Cloud, which, as far as the perſonal liberation of Sir Thomas was concerned, produced the deſired effect. But as far as concerns the public right of nations, or the ceremonial of courts, no apology appears to have been offered, nor has any atonement been made. The perſon of Sir Thomas Rumbold was releaſed, and his papers reſtored; but not till after his perſon had been ſeized in the dead of night in a neutral ſtate, tranſported thence to Paris, and confined, for ſeveral days, in priſon; and not till after his papers had been forcibly taken from his poſſeſſion, broken open, ranſacked, and read—Even then, it is ſaid, that he was only liberated on certain conditions; and that before the officer reſtored him to liberty, a ſolemn promiſe was exacted, expreſsly binding him down never again to return to Hamburgh, or within one hundred leagues of the French territory, in a public capacity. I muſt, however, hope, that no ſuch degrading ſtipulations were acceded to. One unlawful act can never authoriſe another; nor can I conceive that any Britiſh Miniſter, feeling himſelf clothed with thoſe ſacred rights which appertain to his character, can have ſo far departed from a juſt conception of his real dignity as to have ſubſcribed to ſuch terms. This affair is, however,

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not yet ſettled, and may ſtill lead to moſt important conſequences.

The remaining ſtates of Germany, more eſpecially thoſe which are contiguous to France, if we unite them in one maſs, can ſcarcely any longer pretend to power or reſpect. So diſorganiſed, and ſo trampled upon, have they been, that their very names are nearly ſunk in oblivion, and unleſs backed by the only two remaining independent members of the empire, they cannot be expected to form, in any ſenſe, a point of reſiſtance. Even Saxony, Bavaria, and the Palatinate, whoſe former hiſtory has been marked by many a ſplendid achievement, have no longer the courage or the ability to contend. Thoſe who, by being nearer, are more within the graſp of France, are ſtill more humiliated. How have they been mulcted and terrified! how have their once proud princes been inſulted and diſgraced! and by whom? By Bonaparte—one who but a few years back would have diſfigured the levee of the pettieſt of their tribe. But they are now become the puppets of this man. Why, there is not a menial ſervant in England, who, if he had been treated by his maſter with half the diſtance or contempt which theſe ſovereign princes have experienced from Bonaparte, would not have quitted his ſervice with diſdain. It is really impoſſible to con-

ceive how men endowed with the common feelings and attributes of our nature, men too who from their cradles have been accuſtomed to the pomp of ſtate, and the exerciſe of power, could have been brought to brook ſuch arrogance with ſuch ſubſerviency. Not only to be obliged to leave their dominions at the imperious ſummons of this upſtart Corſican, but to dangle in his train, to ſhiver for hours in his anti-chambers, to croud to his circle, to be ſhouldered by his courtiers, and to catch, with anxious look and diſſembled pleaſure, a ſmile or a word! When we know that all this, and much more, has happened, we feel a kind of contemptuous compaſſion for ſuch beings, and totally deſpair of the revival of any principle of manly virtue.

In proceeding to the north of Europe, we there perceive a much more flattering proſpect of vigorous reſiſtance. Hope ſeems to riſe with unclouded rays in that horizon, and that country whoſe barbarous hordes once poured deſtruction on the poliſhed but effeminate ſouth, ſeems now likely to make full reparation for the dreadful calamities which it formerly inflicted. To that quarter we muſt now chiefly direct our views for the firſt grand effort of reſiſtance which may check the profligate career of Bonaparte, and eventually

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diſengage the continent from his annihilating graſp.

The rapid progreſs of this vaſt empire towards improvement is one of the ſurpriſing events of modern times. Its population, its riches, and revenue, ſtill bear no proportion to its extent; but when we contemplate it at the acceſſion of Peter the Ist, and as it now diſplays itſelf, we have ample room for aſtoniſhment.

Two enterpriſing reigns, that of Peter I. who may be conſidered as the founder, and that of Catherine II. who may be conſidered as the confirmer, of its European grandeur, were able to produce theſe mighty effects; and leſs than another century may raiſe it above every other ſtate in Chriſtendom. Diſtantly removed as it at preſent is from France, it is apparently leſs intereſted than Auſtria or Pruſſia in the fortunes of that empire; but, extending our views to future times, we may eaſily imagine them in contact.

The ſudden dereliction of the late Emperor of Ruſſia from the powerful league which had been wiſely formed to arreſt the encroachments of France, may, in ſome meaſure, be aſcribed to the natural impetuoſity of his character. It can alſo be accounted for on principles which are not much at variance with the common feelings and prudential maxims of mankind. He engaged in

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the league with full ſincerity, and with a ſincerity founded on the ſtrongeſt impulſe, a thorough conviction of the danger which menaced every ſtate, from the profligate principles of the French cabinet. Theſe principles, which he regarded with abhorrence, he was firmly ſatisfied it was the intereſt of every well-ordered government to controul, as, in proportion to their aſcendancy, was their own ſecurity weakened. He, therefore, on becoming a party to the alliance, ſent a powerful aid, under the command of a ſucceſsful general, to co-operate with the Auſtrian army. The good fortune which attended their joint exertions, and the rapid expulſion of the French from Italy, are ſtill freſh in our recollection. The Ruſſians, who with dauntleſs hearts marched up to the cannon's mouth, ſoon ſtruck their adverſaries with diſmay. Where they attacked, they ſtormed; and the deciſion and rapidity of their evolutions convinced their opponents that they had a deſperate enemy to contend with. Unacquainted with their mode of fighting, it made an immediate impreſſion. Alarm ſpread to ſuch a degree through the republican ranks, that, after a few encounters, it was with difficulty that they could be brought to face theſe fierce antagoniſts. The impetuoſity of the Ruſſians was tempered by the more deliberate movements of the Auſtrians,

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and the outſet ſeemed to augur the moſt flattering concluſion. The confederate armies were, in every inſtance, triumphant; and the ſucceſs might have continued, had not the ſelfiſh policy of Auſtria diſappointed the hopes of Europe, and occaſioned a breach with her new ally.

The Auſtrian commanders, deſirous of huſbanding their troops, which had been thinned by the ſtruggles of ſix or ſeven campaigns, contrived that the Ruſſians ſhould be placed at the moſt dangerous poſts, and, on all occaſions, be expoſed to the brunt of the enemy's attack. This circumſtance alone would not, perhaps, have been a ſource of diſſenſion, as, in theſe caſes, honour, eſpecially in romantic minds, more than counterbalances loſs. But the rewards which were thus valiantly and dearly purchaſed were entirely appropriated to thoſe who had been leaſt active in their acquiſition. Every ſtation, as it fell, was taken poſſeſſion of in the name of the Emperor of Germany. Not a word was ſaid of Paul, ſo that his troops were treated as mere mercenaries, bound to ſhed their blood, but neither to participate in the profit nor the glory of their exertions. A jealouſy was thus created between the commanders of the two armies, and, towards the cloſe of their brilliant campaign in Italy, the Ruſſians were ordered, under the command of their victorious

victorious chief, to march to the defence of Switzerland. Theſe orders were complied with, but Suwarrow ſoon found himſelf in a ſituation which he could not with glory maintain. Unprovided with every neceſſary appointment, deſtitute of thoſe arrangements which are ſo eſſential to the ſucceſs of an army in a ſtrange country, he ſoon diſcovered that he muſt eventually be involved in inextricable difficulties. He naturally ſuſpected that he was ſent there to purſue a hopeleſs conteſt, whilſt his troops were periſhing in uſeleſs toils, and the laurel was withering on his own brow. The repreſentation of theſe wrongs to his Imperial maſter produced an effect which might have been eaſily foreſeen on his irritable temper. He became furious; and, without ſeeking for explanation or redreſs; without even conſidering the ruinous conſequences which his haſty deciſion portended to the cauſe in which he had embarked, he ordered his troops to return immediately home, and left the Auſtrians to fight their own battle.

This ſudden and unlooked-for defection was a ſignal to the French for renovated exertion. The enemy whom they moſt dreaded had quitted the field, and thoſe troops, with whom they had repeatedly fought with ſucceſs, preſented a ſolitary oppoſition. They rallied every where; freſh levies

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were poured in in every direction; and in a few weeks their loſſes were recovered.

Paul muſt have contemplated with pride a reverſe which ſo clearly demonſtrated the extent of his power, the valour of his ſoldiers, and the utility of his aſſiſtance. Had his reſentment ſtopped there, it might have been excuſable. But he puſhed it beyond all limits either of juſtice or judgment. He not only ſeceded from the alliance, but former friendſhip ſuddenly converted into the moſt deadly hate, he was precipitated into thoſe meaſures which were beſt calculated to expreſs it. The force which had been granted to the aid, was now devoted to the injury, of the anti-revolutionary cauſe. He entered into a ſtrict treaty of alliance with France, the bad effects of which were only prevented by his premature death. His fortunate demiſe, and the glorious battle of Copenhagen, brought to a ſpeedy diſſolution the formidable northern confederacy; formidable, as it affected the liberties of the Continent; but, as I, in a former pamphlet* attempted to explain, and as ſubſequent events fully proved, as they applied to Great Britain, by no means aſſuming a terrific aſpect. The brilliant ſucceſſes of this

* A View of the Political Situation of the Northern Powers, published in 1801.

country, added to the general laſſitude and apathy of Europe, led to the peace of 1802.

That peace, which was not only degrading in its terms, but impolitic in its views, was fortunately of ſhort duration. It has, indeed, been attended with one uſeful conſequence, which, however, was neither foreſeen nor aimed at by its authors. It has opened the eyes of Europe, in ſome degree, and of this country completely, with regard to the ſyſtematic ambition of France. It has proved, in the moſt indiſputable way, that the object of France is univerſal domination; and that her efforts, whether of open violence or inſidious deſign, towards the accompliſhment of that aim, are only to be counteracted by force. Of what utility are the vigilance and addreſs of cabinets, when no written inſtrument is conſidered as binding; when promiſes are made only to be broken, and treaties ſigned only to be violated, as occaſion may require, or intereſt ſuggeſt? With ſuch principles and views, a ſyſtem of plunder and deſpotiſm can be more ſecurely and ſucceſsfully proſecuted in peace than in war. Intrigues are conducted without interruption; force is applied without oppoſition; and, when the object is effected, we are left to wonder at our credulity.

The ſhort truce, for it can hardly be denominated a peace, which was agreed on by England and

and France, not only unfolded the deſigns of Bonaparte, but his mode of execution. The continental powers, although they have not yet declared themſelves, have, no doubt, as well as England, been watchful of events. Ruſſia, above all, has carefully treaſured up in her recollection the occurrences of the laſt three years; and, no longer under the dominion of a capricious deſpot, but of a mild and wiſe ſovereign, her means will, in all probability, be as vigorouſly diſplayed as her meaſures have been conſiſtently adopted. To Ruſſia, therefore, Europe, may principally look up, as the prime mover of that ſpirit of re-action which may yet redeem her from deſtruction, and which may point out the path of glory to the ſtill more potent means of Auſtria and Pruſſia.

Ruſſia, as a continental power, is a moſt formidable foe; and if not of ſuch importance as Auſtria and Pruſſia, in an attack on France, it is only on account of the diſtance of her ſeparation. Her troops are equally numerous, and equally valiant, and, in ſome reſpects, they may claim a ſuperiority. They are entirely devoted to their officers, and poſſeſs both the active and paſſive virtues of a ſoldier. They can patiently wait in inaction; but the inſtant they receive their orders, nothing but death can check their ardour. The command and the execution are ſimultaneous.

The vigour and hardineſs of their conſtitution give them another decided advantage over the troops of more ſouthern climes. The education which they receive promotes theſe qualities, and enables them to encounter, without inconvenience, the moſt ſudden tranſitions of climate. A Ruſſian can not only exiſt, but retain poſſeſſion of all his energies, while he is purſuing a mode of life which would deſtroy a leſs maſculine race. He endures, without murmur, every privation and every fatigue. Enured from his infancy to every kind of hardſhip; bred up in notions of implicit ſubmiſſion to his ſuperiors; accuſtomed to ſupport labour, hunger, and cold, in the ordinary avocations of life, he never finds himſelf out of his ſphere, nor does he ever repine at thoſe viciſſitudes to which a military life is ſo peculiarly expoſed.

Ruſſia is, on many accounts, the natural ally of Britain. Separated as we are, by an almoſt immeaſurable diſtance, we are connected by many reciprocal ties, and our intereſts in no ſhape claſh. The commercial intercourſe which ſubſiſts between the two countries is highly beneficial to both. The revenue of Ruſſia is, indeed, principally derived from its vaſt concerns with Great Britain, which is the chief mart that conſumes her immenſe exportations, and ſpreads induſtry and wealth through the remoteſt regions of her empire.

It is a great miſtake to imagine that, becauſe our manufacturers pay for the raw materials of Ruſſia, the exchange is detrimental to the productive labour of that country. The fact is, Ruſſia is not yet in a ſtate to have many manufactures of her own; and, whilſt this incapacity continues, it is much better that her wants ſhould be ſupplied from a foreign market. In this manner, ſhe obtains them at the leaſt poſſible expence, and foreign induſtry allows domeſtic labour to purſue a more advantageous courſe. Agriculture muſt precede manufacture: and whilſt the capital of Britain enables the Ruſſian farmer to cultivate his land, the articles of utility and taſte, for which his produce are exchanged, gradually beget the deſire of imitation, and expand his mind to higher attainments. France may boaſt of the importance of her trade with Ruſſia; but when it is made known that the raw materials purchaſed by England, amount annually to near £.5,000,000 ſterling, and that thoſe taken off by France, in the days of its greateſt commercial proſperity, never exceeded from 4 to £.600,000, which, ſince the revolution, have dwindled to between 2 and £.300,000, the ſubſtance of that importance completely vaniſhes.

Sweden, the northern neighbour of Ruſſia, will apparently become an immediate party to the alliance. She may, in fact, be conſidered as actually embarked, and already at war with France. The warlike

warlike diſpoſition of her inhabitants will render her a powerful auxiliary. The young Prince, who ſways the ſceptre of that antient kingdom, has ſhewn himſelf worthy of his illuſtrious deſcent. He has ſhewn that he poſſeſſes virtues which ennoble the proudeſt blood, and adorn the loftieſt ſtation. The ſame gallant ſpirit which animated the breaſts of his anceſtors has been tranſmitted, without diminution, to himſelf: a legacy more valuable than the crown which he inherits. Guſtavus Adolphus, in his time, ſtood forth the advocate and champion of Europe, and was a principal inſtrument in diſſolving a league which threatened its deſtruction. Guſtavus IV. treading in his luminous footſteps, may alſo be an inſtrument, deſtined at a more awful criſis to ſave her from a more melancholy fate. Inexperienced as he is, and incompetent as his means, when meaſured with the reſources of France, viſibly are, he at leaſt has had the merit of firſt declaring his ſentiments, of firſt throwing down the gauntlet of defiance, of firſt ſetting the brilliant example. However he may have erred as a politician, which remains to be proved, he has felt and acted with the honour of a ſoldier, and the dignity of a king. Conſcious of his royal deſcent, and of the glory of being the legitimate governor of a warlike people, he received into his dominions, with every regal honour, the rightful owner of the

French

French throne, and has diſdainfully refuſed to brook the inſults of an uſurper. How ſuperior, in the ſound eſtimation of mankind, muſt ſuch a Prince be ever held to the mean object of French idolatry. The one riſks an empire by virtues which alone are worthy of preſerving it: the other has acquired an empire by vices by which it ſhould be loſt. But whatever may be the deſtiny of this brave and patriotic monarch, the fame of worthy deeds will triumph in the gratitude of poſterity, and whilſt the memory of his name ſhall be attended with bleſſing, that of his adverſary will be loaded with execration.

His dominions will, probably, be one of the firſt objects of attack, but he has one advantage which Bonaparte can never again poſſeſs, the ſpirit of his people in his favour: nor do I at all deſpair, groundleſs as the hope may appear to ſome, that the legions of France will be repulſed by the energies of the Swedes.

In our eſtimate of the ſtrength of this kingdom in a continental war, we muſt recollect what it has formerly achieved. Guſtavus Vaſa liberated his country from the Daniſh yoke. Guſtavus Adolphus, the greateſt captain of his age, ſaved the liberties of Germany, and gave a ſtability to the proteſtant faith. Charles the XII. was, for a long time, the terror of Europe; and the late King made

made the powerful Catharine tremble in her capital. Guſtavus III. however intemperate in his zeal, reſcued his country from Ruſſian ſubjection, and, by the revolution of 1772, laid the foundation of a more proſperous era. Like Joſeph the II. he was too precipitate in his reforms: but his dominions are at this moment deriving advantages from many regulations which were the production of his active mind. Should Sweden be ſucceſsful in the approaching ſtruggle, France will ſhrink from her pretenſions faſter than ſhe has formed them. The abſurd notion which prevails of the ſuperiority of French troops would inſtantly vaniſh, and Europe would, again aſſert her real conſequence.

Denmark, whatever her wiſhes might be, would be ſpeedily forced into the alliance. Conſidering, indeed, the wrongs and inſults which ſhe has experienced, there is every reaſonable ground to think that ſhe would join it with alacrity. The Danes, although they have improved in internal regulation and domeſtic economy, have certainly not the vigour which they formerly poſſeſſed. A ſelfiſh ſpirit of intereſt and love of trade have vitiated many of their nobleſt feelings. In point of lucre they have been the moſt ſucceſsful of all the northern ſtates. By the continental wars which have ariſen out of the French revolution, they

they have been conſiderable gainers. They have ſhared part of the fragments of the French commerce; and a great portion of the carrying trade, which was formerly ſo profitable to Holland, has fallen into their hands. Thus, if their arms are leſs to be dreaded, their treaſury is better filled. Againſt the French the Norwegians would moſt readily engage, and much might be expected from the courage and zeal of that gallant people. It muſt, indeed, be an object of high importance to the crown of Denmark to reduce the power of France, which is become a moſt troubleſome and dangerous neighbour.

Turkey, whoſe councils are neceſſarily influenced by thoſe of St. Peterſburgh, would alſo adminiſter a powerful aid. The Mahometan troops, contending alone againſt thoſe of Chriſtendom, have little proſpect of ſucceſs; but inſtructed by the ſkill, and encouraged by the example of Europeans, they are a formidable force. The campaign of 1801 in Egypt furniſhed many illuſtrations of the juſtneſs of this remark. The French, however, ſtill pretend to a preponderance of influence at the Porte, but facts contradict the aſſertion. It is not, indeed, likely that France ſhould at preſent retain at Conſtantinople an aſcendancy over Ruſſia. Diſtantly removed as Turkey is from the former, and dependent as ſhe

is on the latter, the ſtrong feelings of intereſt naturally point out to her that alliance which is ſo immediately intervowen with her ſafefty. The French, confined as they now are from remote expeditions, are not likely to endanger the ſecurity of the Turkiſh empire: whereas Ruſſia is at her very doors, and, as well from poſitive ſtrength, as from the intrigues of the Greeks, and the powerful faction which is devoted to her in the very heart of the Sultan's dominions, could ſhake his throne to its foundations. The miſchief of French intrigue is therefore likely to terminate ſpeedily at the Porte, and unleſs Le Brun makes a precipitate retreat, he may very poſſibly, ere long, find himſelf a priſoner in the Seven Towers.

The King of Naples, weakened and degraded as he has been, muſt be nevertheleſs anxious to contribute every thing in his power that may conduce to extricate him from his preſent embarraſſing ſituation, to reſtore him to the eclipſed ſplendour of his rank, and to his territories, over which he has long held a mere nominal reign.

Nor will Portugal be backward, the moment ſhe is encouraged by the fainteſt glimmer of ſucceſs. How exultingly will ſhe burſt aſunder thoſe chains which ſhe has worn with indignation, and how joyfully will thoſe taunts and in-

ſults

ſults which ſhe has been compelled to tolerate from the brutal Laſnes, be retaliated on the head of his Corſican maſter. The Portugueſe abhor both the Spaniards and the French; the former from the memory of paſt domination, the latter from the feelings of preſent ſuffering. They are in the ſame degree attached to us. They recollect the generous ſupplies which were voted by the Britiſh Parliament after the dreadful earthquake of Liſbon in 1755, and the ſuccours in arms, ammunition, proviſion, and men, which we ſent in 1762, and which ſaved them from a ſecond Spaniſh ſubjugation. The independence of their country is ſtill worthy of contention; and if once the councils of their court could be invigorated, and they could be brought to place a proper dependence on their own ſtrength, the effort might not be an unſucceſsful one. Portugal has, for the laſt fifty years, been chiefly ſupported by her connexion with Great Britain, her oldeſt and moſt uſeful ally. The trade which ſhe carries on with us is of the moſt beneficial kind. We purchaſe almoſt the entire produce of her ſoil, which, if overrun by French troops, it will be the cruel policy of France to deſtroy, to oblige us to have recourſe to her market for our wines.

Even Spain, though at preſent compelled to

diſſemble, if a fair opportunity preſented itſelf, would, in all probability, ſtart up from her trance, and, vindicating her wrongs, would aſſail that cauſe which ſhe is now reluctantly doomed to aſſiſt. The Spaniards are a gallant, generous, and high-minded nation; and however the court, which has long been at the mercy of a venal and abandoned faction, may be ſubdued, the ſpirit of the people ſtill lives in the recollection of paſt achivements.

Let us now take a view of thoſe unhappy countries which have been either formally or virtually annexed to the territory of France, and over which ſhe holds an abſolute and undiſguiſed ſway. Let us endeavour to aſcertain what their real ſentiments and wiſhes muſt inevitably be, reſpecting the pretended advantage which they have gained by a change of maſters.

Savoy, which, through a ſucceſſion of ages, flouriſhed under its native princes, has been doomed, for the laſt ten years, to groan under the burden of French ſervitude. The glory and advantages of an independent rank loſt; the ſplendour and expenſe of a court removed; its ſovereign confined to the ſterile mountains of Sardinia; and an exile from the productive part of his hereditary dominions; wandering about a fugitive, without conſequence, and almoſt without ſupport.

This

This country, which held a reſpectable rank among the ſovereign ſtates of Europe, and the independence of which was of ſuch importance, as the chief barrier of Italy, now forms a part of the French Empire. It has not only been degraded from its ſtation, but robbed of its wealth. It has been overburdened with taxes, and ſubjected to military conſcriptions and contributions, which have beaten down every fence againſt oppreſſion, and worn out every ſinew of ſtrength. Inſtead of a regular, lawful, and uncorrupt adminiſtration, a ſet of paupers and ruffians, in the character of French agents, have been advanced to the government, whoſe perpetual object has been to amaſs riches by any means; and who, in the exerciſe of their functions, have been inſtigated and ſupported by the government from which they are delegated. This indeed has been the uniform treatment which conquered ſtates have experienced from the French. Their profligate policy has ever been, when once they have gained a ſecure footing, to put in practice every vexatious mode of proceeding, and to ſkreen themſelves from the penalties of reſiſtance by completely breaking the ſpirit of the people. In the application of theſe atrocious cruelties they have unfortunately been too ſucceſsful. By creating jealouſies and enmities between parties, and placing them one againſt

the

the other, they have acquired the maſtery, which, when once obtained, has been exerted in acts of ruin. Genoa, Milan, and Tuſcany, thoſe once fertile and flouriſhing parts of Italy, the ſeat of commercial opulence, uſeful induſtry, and cultivated taſte, and the nurſery and repoſitory of the fine arts, have been treated with the ſame unqualified barbarity and ſcorn. Even the papal territories have not been ſpared, and to ſo abject a ſtate of contempt is the pope reduced, that he can only be conſidered as a machine, whoſe movements Bonaparte directs. The church has been made completely ſubſervient to his views, and its miniſters, throughout the extent of their dominion, pay implicit obedience to his commands. The overbearing inſolence of this man is without precedent. When he aſſumes power, next to the poſſeſſion of it, his object ſeems to be to mortify every generous feeling, by impreſſing a conviction of the inſignificance of thoſe over whom he tyranniſes. His ſeizure of the preſidency of the Italian States was certainly one of the moſt inſulting acts that was ever committed by any man who pretended to defer to the opinion of the people, and was a worthy prelude to thoſe parts of the drama which have ſince been exhibited before the Pariſian populace.

Brabant is alſo groaning under the ponderous weight

weight of the ſame galling and ignominious thraldom, enraged at French treachery, and panting for emancipation. Diſaffected as it was, and with ſome cauſe, to the houſe of Auſtria, that diſaffection has been converted into love, by the iron rule of France. Its towns depopulated, its plains deſerted, its commerce loſt, its rights annulled, its people trampled on, agriculture and manufactures rapidly declining, its taxes more than quadrupled, this once flouriſhing country no longer exhibits a ſemblance of its priſtine greatneſs. Bruxelles once the reſidence of a polite court, the reſort of the learned and the rich, the centre of gaiety and the arts, is now placed under the ſordid and deſpotic adminiſtration of a French governor, who feels no pride in its happineſs, no intereſt in its proſperity, but who, uncertain how long his office may laſt, inſults with contempt, and grinds with oppreſſion. The ſtreets are in a manner abandoned, the principal houſes are untenanted, the churches are diſmantled. Many of theſe ſacred ſtructures, which were dedicated to the ſervice of God, are now converted into barracks, where a licentious ſoldiery hold their blaſphemous orgies, and, whilſt ſcoffing at the ſanctity of the place, make a mockery of the miſeries of the people.

Switzerland next preſents itſelf, over whoſe ruins

ruins no feeling or virtuous mind can dwell without emotions of the deepeſt indignation and regret. This ſacred ſoil, which has produced ſo many heroes, which was the ſeat of ſimplicity of manners, and unambitious happineſs, and which, for centuries paſt, has been one of the chief nurſeries of liberty, how has it been polluted and defaced. Since the great æra of its independence*, for which it ſo nobly fought, it has been unmoleſted in the enjoyment of its rights. Like the ancient Olympia, which was reſpected by the whole of Greece, Switzerland was reſpected by the whole of Europe. It was regarded as a palladium which was entitled to the reverence of mankind. Surrounded as it was by powerful ſtates, it was held inviolable by them all. With no ambition but that of remaining as it was, its virtues, and the memory of paſt deeds, were a ſufficient ſafeguard. It was contemplated by the philoſopher and the

* Twelve men, at whose head was the immortal William Tell, in 1308, liberated the cantons of Schweitz, Underwald, and Uri, from the Austrian yoke. The only revenge which they took on the Austrian governors was to conduct them to the frontiers, where they administered to them an oath that they would never again serve against the Helvetian nation. The other countries soon joined the confederacy, and, after a long and desperate struggle against the whole power of Austria, they completely established their independence.

ſtateſman,

ſtateſman, as a ſanctuary which encloſed the faireſt virtues of our kind, which was the reſidence of religious toleration, moral rectitude, civil liberty, domeſtic happineſs, innocent courage, and manly ſimplicity. Satisfied with its own poſſeſſions, and ſeldom, in its political capacity, intermeddling with the concerns of other ſtates, it was an inſulated ſpot, where all the purpoſes of good government were anſwered, and none of its diſtractions felt. Abundant without ſuperfluity, affluent without luxury, ſtrong without ambition, it excited neither cupidity nor alarm, and was equally diſregarded by envy and fear. It was a country to which the traveller, ſick of the pomp, the buſtle, and the diſſipation of other parts, could retire with ſatisfaction and ſafety; and, whilſt reſiding among its uncorrupted inhabitants, could contemplate the majeſtic features of nature; and, in the midſt of a vicious world, mingle with the unadulterated manners of a virtuous people.

But nothing has been held ſacred by the French, nothing has interdicted the career of their profane attacks. Poverty and wealth, honour and infamy, virtue and vice, have been conſigned to the ſame fate; even weakneſs has provoked hatred, and invited aſſault. Where little profit was to be derived, they have, in many inſtances, conſidered happineſs and innocence as a reproach to their

own character, and, on that account ſolely, have doomed them to deſtruction.

Switzerland, however, preſented other allurements. It was one of the barriers which defended the German empire, and was conſequently an obſtacle to French ambition. But ſtrongly as it is fortified by nature, and valiantly as it might have been defended by a gallant race of men, had her population been once rouſed, ſhe might have defied the utmoſt efforts of an aſſailant. The French were aware of this, and laid their plans accordingly. Their object, in the firſt inſtance, was not to beat down by violence, but to enſnare by ſtratagem. They brought all the deluſions and machinations of baſe intrigue into action. By threats and promiſes, artfully managed; by creating alarm, and inſtilling ſuſpicion, as the variation of circumſtances ſuggeſted; they at length ſtirred up a ſpirit of diſſenſion and animoſity among the different cantons, and among different families in the ſame canton. The country was thus divided againſt itſelf; and, whilſt each faction was eagerly engaged in the vehement proſecution of their own projects, their minds were called off from the contemplation of the only important point. The public good was loſt ſight of amidſt the diſtraction of private paſſions; the disjointed ſtrength of the confederate ſtates was employed in quelling the

quarrels

quarrels of individuals; and inſubordination and diſunion were every were triumphant. Whilſt theſe ruinous feuds were at their height, the French, who had all along been watching for the opportunity, and had been collecting troops on their frontiers under pretence of guarding againſt any popular tumult, ſtepped in, and enſlaved them. The abhorrence and deteſtation of the Swiſs againſt the French muſt, by this time, be nearly ſcrewed up to a pitch of phrenzy, and woe to thoſe of that nation who may be found there when once their reſentments burſt forth into action. Dreadful will be the retribution of that day.

But Switzerland, though it may recover its independence, will never again be what it was. The ſpirit which aſſerts and preſerves the rights of mankind is broken by oppreſſion. French vices have alſo been engrafted on the ſimplicity of their natures, and the public ſtock of happineſs has been for ever adulterated. That genuine love of our natal ſoil, that purity of public virtue, which are the only real ſafeguards of civil liberty, have been contaminated by the deleterious principles of factious demagogues and viſionary legiſlators. The deſire of revenge and emancipation may ſtill beat high; but ample as the ſacrifice offered up to the one may, at ſome future period,

be, the other will never be enjoyed with that reverence for the object, or reliſh for the poſſeſſion, which formerly obtained.

And what muſt alſo be the ſenſations of Hanover, that much-injured and enſlaved country. Scarcely does the page of hiſtory, ample and variegated as it is, furniſh an inſtance of ſuch ſcandalous perfidy, and barbarous uſage, as blacken this foul tranſaction. Torn from the protection of a beneficent ſovereign, and delivered up to the avaricious cruelty of a deſtroying fiend, the tranſition was no leſs ſudden than outrageous. If we were to narrate the anecdotes of this unhappy country, ſince it has been at the diſpoſal of the French banditti; if the crimes of thoſe infernal agents, who have been ſent to prey upon its vitals, were to be faithfully detailed; what ſcenes of infamy, extortion, and brutality, would meet the eye! All the foulеſt vices which human imagination can conceive, or human depravity commit, inſtigated by all the revenge which the human heart can contain, have been perpetrated in that unoffending electorate. How the Hanoverians muſt now deplore their credulity! how they muſt now lament, that they did not aſſemble on their frontiers to reſiſt theſe profligate invaders! to repel them, or to periſh in the attempt! How glorious is the contemplation of death when gained in one's country's

country's defence! with what charms ſurrounded, with what honour irradiated! The commendation of the wife, the eſteem of the good, the approbation of one's own heart, the brilliancy of example, the diſcharge of duty, and the certainty of living in the recollection of an admiring and grateful poſterity. How truly enviable to a life which is led in ſervility, and diſgraceful bondage, the opprobrium or the pity of mankind, and an object of deriſion to the tyrant who iſſues his terrific decrees. The people of this country muſt be thirſting for an opportunity of wiping off the ſtain of diſgrace, and vindicating their ancient character.*

Laſt of all comes Holland to cloſe this melancholy liſt; a country, which, if we regard its paſt fame and power, we are at a loſs to conceive ſo fallen. What a different ſpectacle does ſhe preſent, ſhaking off the yoke of her old tyrants in the ſixteenth century, and in the eighteenth bending her neck to

* In 1757 the Hanoverians were exposed in the same manner, though not in the same degree, to French tyranny and rapine. The French, after breaking the convention of Closter Seven, insisted that the Hanoverians should deliver up their arms. Roused by a sense of the indignity offered to the honour of a brave and warlike people, they resolved to rescue their country from the degrading oppression, and the following year, under Ferdinand of Brunswick, they bravely made head against their conquerors, expelled them from the electorate, and forced them to repass the Rhine.

a new tyranny an hundred times more intolerable. In one inſtance, we find a high-minded and generous people, irritated by a ſenſe of wrongful oppreſſion, redeeming thir legitimate rights, and laying the foundations of the ſecurity, the happineſs, and the proſperity, of a great country: in the other, the total abſence of all theſe public and patriotic virtues, ſacrificing that country, with all its greatneſs, and happineſs, and proſperity, at the ſhrine of depraved avarice, factious diſcord, and ſelfiſh ambition. In the one inſtance, ſome of the firſt ſtateſmen and warriors of the age (an age fertile in eminent men) regulating, and wiſely conducting, the energies of a whole people; in the other, a band of venal demagogues, repreſſing their feelings, and again delivering up the ſtate to the power of a foreign and ſanguinary uſurpation. In former times Holland has reſiſted the whole power of France; but the vigour of the people has waſted itſelf in the purſuit of opulence and eaſe. Since the treaty of Utrecht, ſhe has viſibly declined in political conſequence: ſince her connexion with revolutionary France, ſhe has been completely ruined.

With a great population, long habits of induſtry, an extenſive commerce, a powerful and well-appointed navy, and ſome of the ſtrongeſt fortreſſes in Europe, garriſoned by well diſciplined

and

and well affected troops, one ſhould naturally have imagined, that, in proportion as the means of defence were poſſeſſed, thoſe means would, in ſo honourable a cauſe, have been vigorouſly employed. Above all, the pride of independence, particularly of that independence, which had been wreſted by the daring hand of patriotiſm from the galling fetters of tyranny; which had been gained by a ſeries of gallant exploits; and which had ſo completely proved the ſuperiority of the efforts of freemen oppoſed to thoſe of ſlaves. Theſe recollections, one ſhould have conceived, would have impreſſed them with a due ſenſe of the value of their acquiſitions, and would have inſpired them with the fortitude that was neceſſary to ſhield it. But events have ſhown that the Dutch thought, and felt otherwiſe. Corrupted by wealth, diſunited by faction, diſcouraged by ſuſpicion, and incenſed againſt their domeſtic rulers, they deemed this the moment moſt fit for the exerciſe of private reſentment, and ſacrificed their country to their revenge. The French, taking advantage of theſe culpable and puſillanimous diſpoſitions, inſured to themſelves an eaſy conqueſt. They poured in their troops on every ſide; the ſtrongeſt fortreſſes were ſurrendered the moment they were ſummoned; and theſe intruders, who were hailed as their deliverers, have ſince held over them an uninterrupted ſway.

But

But the Dutch have been wofully disappointed; and, instead of receiving at their hands the benefits of a friend, have been treated with all the severity and contempt of a conquered foe. Since the year 1795 they have been little more than a province of France. Their nominal independence has only served to render their virtual subjugation more galling; as they have suffered all the disadvantages of French servitude, without receiving any of the benefits of French protection. They have been attacked at every point; and whilst we, as their declared enemies, were capturing their colonial possessions, the French, as their professed friends, by draining them of their domestic resources, were inflicting a more deadly blow. Nearly the whole capital of Holland has been paid into the treasury of France and they seem at last to be reduced to a state of absolute destitution and despair.* They have indeed, in a great degree,

* Van Hasselt, one of the members of the Batavian legislative body, in a speech delivered on the 1st January, before a secret meeting of that assembly, in consequence of an application from the Executive Directory for the *third* extraordinary contribution of one per cent. on *capital*,* to cover the expences

* One per. cent on capital is equal to twenty per cent. on income, and this being the third *extraordinary* contribution in one year, amounts to a total of sixty per cent. It must be observed that these are only the *extraordinary* contributions—the *ordinary* ones are also going on in the same proportion.

degree, merited their fate; and it is to be hoped, that their unexampled ſufferings will act as a warning to other ſtates, and cauſe them to heſitate before they reſort to the deſperate expedient of calling in a foreign enemy for the ſuppreſſion of domeſtic broils.

With all theſe ſprings of hatred and reſiſtance in ſtates which are ſtill free; in thoſe which are ſtill nominally ſo; and in thoſe which have been formerly ſubjugated and annexed: let us now take a ſurvey of the internal ſituation of France itſelf, and endeavour to aſcertain the chances of overpowering the obſtacles which remain to be oppoſed.

I have never been one of thoſe who have thought that the power of France has been augmented proportionally with the extent of its territorial acquiſitions. It is even a poſition from which I

pences of the year 1804, has circumstantially detailed the complete ruin of that country, occasioned by its connexion with France. It has exposed, in glaring colours, the scandalous abuses, and corrupt and arbitrary proceedings, of French administration. With what shame and regret must the Dutch look back to those glorious days, when her fleets were contending with those of Britain for superiority. They have, however, shewn their esteem for us, in the only way in which they have been able to shew it, by their generous behaviour to the British seamen who were lately wrecked on their coast.

widely diſſent. We muſt, in caſes of this kind, take into account, not only the nature of the acquiſition, but the mode of acquiring. When a powerful ſtate extends its rule over freſh conqueſts, or receives under its protection perſecuted provinces which flee to it for ſuccour, by a mild and equitable adminiſtration, the affections of its new ſubjects may be gained, and the tie may become permanent. This muſt depend on management. But when we conſider the manner in which France has enlarged her dominion, and the manner in which it has been retained, it is totally impoſſible that the ſpirit of revolt can be repreſſed, except by a ſtrong military force. When this is the caſe, when a country is kept poſſeſſion of by the mere rigour of martial law, all the advantages which flow from affection or union neceſſarily ceaſe; and although much may ſtill be extorted by power, yet the expences of ſupporting that power abſorb every ſuperfluity, and the natural reſources and regular income, which are alone beneficially, becauſe permanently, productive, are loſt. Every thing is exacted with a reluctance bordering on denial, and nothing but the harſheſt meaſures can wring from the people the contributions which are required. The reſources of a country ſo abuſed, muſt neceſſarily dwindle, till at laſt the diminiſhed receipts of theſe exactions are conſumed in

in the expence of maintaining troops for the ſuppreſſion of rebellion.

If therefore we contemplate the map of Europe, we ſhall find that the immenſe ſtanding military force of France, amounting to near 600,000 men, is ſo diſtributed over her vaſt empire, in order to keep her own ſubjects in ſubmiſſion, that any formidable army, aſſembled on any particular frontier, would expoſe the interior, from which it muſt partly be drawn, to the dangers of popular inſurrection and civil war.

When in fact we inveſtigate the real ſituation of France, diveſted of all the pomp and circumſtance of its viſible power and extent, I know of no country that is more truly an object of commiſeration. All that it formerly poſſeſſed of merit and worth; all that claimed our reſpect from learning, arts, religion, or morals; the ſplendour of rank, the politeneſs of manners, and the refinement of taſte, have diſappeared; and we now behold a people plunged into every vice, and glorying in every crime. The inherent levity, frivolity, and cruelty, of the French nation have continued to exiſt, without being tempered or eclipſed by any of thoſe generous feelings for which men of high deſcent and liberal education are generally conſpicuous.

Since, however the renewal of war, whatever

magic may have encircled it before, the intrinſic value of the character of this people is completely revealed. Any ſagacity ſhort of brutal can now alſo decypher the character of their chief; a man who, in no one inſtance of his abandoned and deſtructive career, can have challenged the eſteem of any friend to virtue or humanity. It is not becauſe Bonaparte is the enemy of Britain, that Britons abhor him: it is not becauſe he has raiſed himſelf from a private ſtation to a throne that he excites our indignation; but becauſe he has, in his vitious career, perpetrated every crime; becauſe the ſteps, by which he has ascended, are polluted with infamy, and ſtained with blood. Who was a more bitter enemy to this country than Waſhington, or who more calculated to produce thoſe feelings which ariſe out of a ſenſe of injury, and are aggravated by a recollection of defeat? Yet who was more reſpected in this country than Waſhington? A proof that we have the generoſity to admire and to eſteem a great man, however adverſe his name and exertions may have been, in thoſe reſpects which are moſt likely to wound the pride and honour of a high-ſpirited nation.

The ſucceſs of Bonaparte has alſo been ſurpriſing; but it has only proved what has been often proved before, that Providence, at times, ſelects the vileſt inſtruments to fulfil its ends. That he ſhould

have reached the ſummit of his hopes, by the ſame conduct by which he firſt introduced himſelf to notice, is illuſtrative of the profligate conſiſtency of his character. But he has poſſibly been raiſed ſo high, only that his fall may be the more remarkable; and I cannot help thinking, that he is reſerved as ſome ſignal inſtance of vengeance which may be held forth as a terrible example to future uſurpers. His character is compounded of all that is treacherous or cruel. The great ſtretch of his mind conſiſts in planning with impenetrable artifice what he executes with appalling deſperation. He wears the maſk of hypocriſy till he can caſt it away with effect: he then impoſes on the fears of thoſe whom he controuls, by the hardihood of the contrivance, and the celerity of the action. It is thus that he has freed himſelf from every competitor. It is thus that he overawed Sieyes, diſmiſſed the Directory, and depoſed his colleagues in the conſulſhip. It is thus that he enſnared Moreau, at one time the moſt popular man in France, adored by the army, reſpected by his enemies, the moſt ſucceſsful general which the revolution had produced, and who is now leading a life of inſignificance and diſgrace at Cadiz, with two of Bonaparte's retainers perpetually at his elbow.

I muſt, nevertheleſs, contend that Bonaparte, however ſucceſsful he may have been, does not poſ-

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ſeſs one of the diſtinctive features of a truly great mind. His vanity is exceſſive; his love of pomp puerile; his ambition inordinate and inconſiſtent. He has no moderation, no generoſity, no command of his paſſions. He is endowed neither with the comprehenſion of the ſtateſman, nor the detail of the financier. He has neither powers of eloquence, nor dignity of deportment. His courage is the deſperate ſallies of a maniac, and his military talents have, in numberleſs inſtances, been ſurpaſſed. Still people are apt to aſk, how, with all theſe defects, has he been able to attain his preſent ſituation? My anſwer is, that theſe very defects have, in no ſmall degree, contributed to his elevation. His perſeverance is unconquerable, his cunning inſcrutable, his activity indefatigable. Being, at the ſame time, deſtitute of every virtuous principle, he has not been retarded by thoſe reſtraints which influence the motives, and operate on the actions, of other men. Villainy firſt marked him out for diſtinction, which a plaint ſubſerviency ſecured to him; and that power which fortune beſtowed was ſoon rendered acceſſary to more expanded views. One ſituation opened the road to another. He trampled down every fence that interrupted his progreſs. His dark working ſoul conducted him through all the labyrinths of guilt, and enabled him to explore

plore the moſt intricate mazes of wickedneſs. It led him to ſtop at no ſacrifice, to be ſtartled at no crime; but, as his intereſt required, to ſave, with a ſmile, his moſt bitter enemy, or to aſſaſſinate, without compunction, his moſt confidential friend. By ſuch means has he acquired the power which he holds: by ſuch means does he deſign to retain its poſſeſſion.

With omnipotent ſway over a humiliated and enſlaved people, whoſe fainteſt murmurs he can inſtantly ſtifle; purſuing a plan of action which profeſſedly holds in thorough ſcorn all public opinion; equally diſregarding religion, morality, or juſtice, the rights of his own people, or thoſe of foreign ſtates; ſurrounded by the ſatellites of his vengeance, who execute, with ready obedience, his ſanguinary decrees; regardleſs of the means; purſuing with unalterable appetency his end: and, if he but ſucceed, quite indifferent whether by aſſaſſination or poiſon, the ſubverſion of domeſtic order, or the invaſion of a neutral country, by the abrogation of ſolemn ordinances, or the promulgation of freſh mandates:—ſuch a man, with ſuch a force, can, within the limits of his ſphere, accompliſh any thing.

But what has he done where he has been valiantly and cordially oppoſed? What is become of his threats againſt this country? He has, it is

true,

true, built his boats, and aſſembled his troops. So far depended on his pleaſure. But here he has ſtopped. Has he ventured to invade our ſhores? Has he forgotten his ſolemn pledge to come in perſon to Britain? Where is this mighty captain, who was to head the celebrated battalions of France, and to deliver up this iſland to pillage and ſlaughter? Has his change of ſtation made him more prudent, and, in proportion to the elevation of his rank, has he lowered the grandeur of his deſigns? Does he then prefer to revel in the magnificence of his uſurped office; to riot in the plunder of his new ſubjects; and be a witneſs of the ſervility of their cringing adulation; to the riſk of this mighty project? Does he prefer the paſſing pomp and ſtate of his polluted dignities, the fulſome flattery of his vulgar courtiers, the ſilent proſtration of a degraded and frivolous people, to the noiſe of camps, the dangers of battles, and the hazardous inconvenience of keeping his word? He has, indeed, ſo far proſpered; and the object of his ambition, for which he has been ſo long ſighing, he has at laſt obtained. But with the elevation of rank, has he acquired the love of his people, or the reſpect of mankind? Is the pillow of ſtate a pillow of repoſe; or do the guards which ſurround his throne, prevent him from dreading the aſſaſſin's knife?

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With what mingled horror and diſguſt do we turn from the ſcene which Paris has lately exhibited: that perſecuted, that inſulted city, ſo recently the ſlaughter-houſe of royalty, the ſcene of maſſacre and torture; whoſe kennels were lately running with blood; whoſe pavement was ſcattered with mangled carcaſes; whoſe dungeons are ſtill crowded with innocent victims. Theſe appalling recollections have been obliterated by ſcenes of feſtive debauch and drunken exhilaration. The buffooneries and capers of mercenaries have been engaged by the government, to exhibit their antics for the deluſion and gratification of a truly ſwiniſh multitude. And why this change, ye inconſiderate and abject people? Becauſe a tyrant has, for the laſt ſix years, been trampling on your privileges; becauſe, previouſly to that period, he was himſelf a chief actor at all the dreadful maſſacres which you witneſſed; becauſe he afterwards, at Toulon, in Italy, and in Egypt, diſplayed the moſt ſanguinary cruelty and the moſt treacherous baſeneſs; becauſe he has conſigned you to miſeries which fifty years of tranquillity and regular government will ſcarcely be ſufficient to repair; becauſe, by a ſyſtem of unparalelled artifice and perfidy, he has at length climbed up to the pinnacle of his ambition; becauſe he now proclaims to the world that you are

ſlaves, that he has ſet himſelf up as an idol which you are commanded to worſhip, as a maſter whom you are compelled to obey. Be wiſe, ye frivolous Pariſians, ſeeing how ye are enthralled! Be grateful for the childiſh paſtimes which his bounty deigns to grant, and which are ſo compatible with your emaſculated minds—But venture not to remonſtrate! Be ſilent in your ſufferings! The act has been your own! Talk not of politics; blame not public meaſures; find no fault with your adminiſtrators. Legions of ſpies, informers, and executioners, encompaſs you; and dungeons, and racks, and guillotines, are gaping for their victims!

If any act that was ever ſubmitted to human contemplation be worthy of exciting the extreme of ridicule, indignation, and diſguſt, it is the late act which raiſed Bonaparte to the imperial dignity. And does this pretender imagine, that, becauſe Pope Leo III. placed the imperial diadem on the brow of Charlemagne, the ſame office, performed towards him by Pope Pius VIIth, can in any degree aſſimilate his character with the brilliant virtues and extraordinary endowments of that truly great man. In the one caſe, it was the powerful head of a moſt powerful church, conſecrating, through the ſuperſtition of mankind, the legal rights of the moſt potent prince in Chriſtendom;

Chriſtendom; in the other, it is the degraded head of a degraded church, proſtituting his ſmall remains of dignity, by aſſiſting at the inauguration of an uſurper. And dares the wretch, who is polluted with every crime which power or meanneſs can commit; who has maſſacred and poiſoned in the maſs; or, when it better ſuited his purpoſe, has adminiſtered, without remorſe, the ſecret dagger and the ſecret bowl; who has himſelf been the perpetrator of every blaſphemy and abomination; dares he, with mockery in his heart, kneel down and offer up his hollow ſupplications to the throne of Almighty God? What muſt we think of the audacious impiety of ſuch a petition, or of the abject ſervility of the chief of a once mighty prieſthood that could officiate at ſuch a ceremony?

But can it be expected, on any ſound principles of human reaſon or experience, that this tragical farce (if I may ſo expreſs myſelf) can for many years endure? I hear people quoting examples from eaſtern ſtory, or from the barbarous ages of our own quarter of the globe. But where is the parallel? Will ſuch precedents in any ſhape apply to the preſent ſtate of Europe? Is it even to be imagined, that a new dynaſty can, in theſe times, be ſucceſsfully planted, and perpetuated, in the very heart of Chriſtendom? And who is the

founder of this empire; or what are his claims to its poſſeſſion, or to the tranſmiſſion of it to his poſterity? A man without rank, without connexions, and, above all, without virtue: who is an alien to the ſoil which he has ſubjugated, and over which he would eterniſe his ſway. The throne itſelf and moſt of the great offices of emolument and truſt filled by ſtrumpets and aſſaſſins, robbers and ſwindlers, peculating officers, handicraft mechanics, and confirmed vagabonds. Really, when we conſider what the character and family of this man are, the imperial titles, which have lately been ſo laviſhly conferred, are the moſt acrimonious ſatire (though not at all intended) on royalty and high deſcent, that was ever promulged to the ridicule of the world. But is it to be poſſibly conceived that theſe tranſactions can endure; that all the ſtrong prejudices of mankind in favour of old families and hereditary diſtinction, are to be obliterated by a deſpotic decree, and to be merged in the contemplation of all this fuſtian dignity and trumpery parade?* With all his powerful protection,

* Bonaparte, it is said, not satisfied with his own elevation, designs to erect two new kingdoms in Italy and Holland for his two *imperial* brothers, *Prince* Joseph and *Prince* Louis, or his *imperial* brother-in-law, *Prince* Murat.

Bonaparte has ſcarcely been able to perſuade a ſingle individual of the antient nobility of France to adorn his court, a place in which their honour would feel an irretrievable diſgrace. A few indeed have ſo diſhonoured their name, but only thoſe who were already covered with contempt, and ſtained with every vice which avarice or impiety could commit.

I pity the feelings of thoſe foreigners whoſe official duties oblige them to attend at theſe upſtart levees; to obſerve the ceremonial of this new court; and to bow before wretches who are among the moſt worthleſs of mankind. If ever a peace ſhould be again ſigned between England and Bonaparte, I do ſincerely hope that Engliſh gentlemen will a little conſult their own dignity, and that not one, except thoſe whoſe painful duty enjoins it, will degrade himſelf by bending the body before ſuch arrogant pretenſion. Thoſe who, during the laſt peace, crouded in the *Conſul's* train, have paid ſeverely for their humility or their curioſity; nor, ſhould the occaſion again preſent itſelf, would the *Emperor* treat them with greater delicacy or condeſcenſion. But let us turn from this odious theme, on which I have already dwelt too long, to the ſober contemplation of this mighty boaſter, and aſcertain, notwithſtanding all his vaunts, what he

he has been able to effect, ſince the renewal of hoſtilities, againſt this country.

If we reduce all theſe threats to the ſtandard of truth, what remains—Nothing—abſolutely nothing. No one battle fought with ſucceſs, no one enterpriſe of moment even attempted. The only object which the French have achieved, was taking by ſurpriſe their own ſettlement of Goree, from which we again expelled them in leſs than a week.

They have indeed aſſembled a mighty army of ſoldiers, and a mighty fleet of boats oppoſite the Britiſh coaſt; but which, ſo far from venturing to face us, they have taken ſpecial care to protect by every kind of fortification and entrenchment, by batteries and chains in every direction, from the vengeance of our attacks. Are theſe then, after ſuch a uſe of their preparations, a people formidable to the independence of this country; a people calculated to make a fearful impreſſion on us; a people likely to ſubdue us? On the contrary, we are the aſſailants, they are the beſieged. We have, with our ſhipping, drawn a line of circumvallation round their coaſt; we have blockaded every harbour. Scarcely a boat can quit or enter their havens without being expoſed to our aſſaults; and, inſtead of venturing to open ſea, they are forced to ſkulk along the ſhore, under

der the protection of their own batteries, to avoid inevitable deſtruction.

What then is this boaſted power of France, this Leviathan which was to ſwallow us up. An imperious challenge was ſent, which told us that we could no longer contend ſingle-handed. We threw the defiance in his teeth, and have proved its falſehood. To what then is the power of France reduced? To a conduct moſt unworthy of its means, to acts of cowardly barbarity, to robbery and piracy. How are its forces employed? In pillaging its own ſubjects, its obedient dependents, and its weak allies; in laying ſinking governments under ruinous contributions; in exerciſing acts of petty vengeance againſt petty ſtates; in invading neutral territories to ſeize a gallant prince, who, for want of a powerful interference, was baſely aſſaſſinated; or a diplomatic gentleman, who, in conſequence of a powerful interference, was as baſely delivered up. Princes, who dare not refuſe, are ordered to attend at a degrading coronation; inſtructions are given to Ambaſſadors at foreign courts, wherever it can be done with ſafety, to demean themſelves with ſupercilious haughtineſs and inſolent indifference towards the ſovereigns by whom they are accredited; members of governments which are nominally free, but intrinſically dependent, are arreſted for exer-

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ciſing thoſe functions which their duties enjoin; and thoſe left are menaced with immediate chaſtiſement, if they do not inſtantly reverſe objectionable decrees, or if they venture in future to intermeddle, in the ſlighteſt degree, with their own affairs.

Having therefore aſcertained the total incapacity of Bonaparte, as far as events have hitherto been diſcloſed, to moleſt this country, let us next examine what we have been able to accompliſh againſt him. In ſpite of all the idle declamation which we have heard; in ſpite of all the grave accuſations which have been adduced againſt the energies of Great Britain; by a candid ſtatement of facts, conſidering the relative poſition of the two countries, it will appear that we have no reaſonable cauſe to be diſſatisfied with our exertions. So far from agreeing that nothing has been done, I am willing to think, and I hope ſhall be able to prove, that we have done a great deal; that, inſtead of having tarniſhed, we have brightened the glory of the nation, and that what has been already achieved may be regarded as the forerunner of more ſignal ſucceſſes.

When firſt we reſumed our hoſtile poſition, the government of the country was certainly in the hands of an incompetent adminiſtration, incompetent both in talent and vigour; and, during whoſe

whoſe rule, almoſt every thing was as unwiſely conceived as inexpertly executed.

The peace of Amiens, conſidering the high ground on which Great Britain then ſtood, was, perhaps, the moſt galling accommodation to which we ever ſubmitted, calculated not only to ſink us in the national opinion, but in the opinion of the whole world. It ſeemed to be a confeſſion, extorted from our weakneſs, that we ſurrendered the palm of victory and honour to France; and that we were no longer able to cope with the ſuperior ſtrength and fortune of her arms. We all recollect what exhilaration it cauſed at the moment; what dejection it cauſed on reflection. The childiſh arrogance of Bonaparte prevented him, however, from taking full advantage of the phlegmatic ſupineneſs, or timorous precaution, of the Britiſh cabinet; and the country was ſaved, in the firſt inſtance, more from his inſane precipitation, than from its own ſenſe of danger.

His reiterated and undiſguiſed acts of inſolence, rapacity, and contempt, rouſed us at length from our lethargy; and, when the merits of the treaty came to be fairly canvaſſed, we diſcovered how miſerably we had been cajoled. This treaty, which had been ſo lately a ſubject of exultation, was now diſapproved of in the ſame proportion; and the mode in which the Chief Conſul preſumed to

dictate that the ſtipulations which it contained ſhould be interpreted and executed, inflamed the indignation of every one that felt for the honour of his country. The miniſtry, however, ſtill continued to waver and protract, fearful to proceed to extremities, till at laſt the unanimous voice of the country demanded vengeance.

War revived, but the ſinews of war were dreadfully relaxed. Our navy had been diſmantled, our naval ſtores diſpoſed of, our veteran troops diſbanded, and the income tax repealed. All theſe meaſures had been precipitated for the ſake of tranſient popularity, or miſconceived frugality, during thirteen months of broken repoſe. Bonaparte, in the mean time, had been augmenting his army, repairing his navy, and carrying on, with unremitting zeal, every project of future annoyance. We had alſo reſtored into his hands nearly all the brilliant conqueſts of an eight-years' war. Nothing then could well be more diſheartening than the reduced ſtate of this country when hoſtilities recommenced: for we had not only granted a reſpite to our bittereſt enemy, which he had moſt advantageouſly employed, but we had, in an inverſe ratio, debilitated our own faculties of offence and reſiſtance.

The unanimous zeal and patriotic ſpirit of the country interpoſed at this perilous criſis to reſcue

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it from impending perdition; and the incapacity of the government was ſupplied and rectified by the loyal energies of the people. One favourable circumſtance, as I have already obſerved, and that not an unimportant one, had, however, reſulted from the peace. It completely got rid of the old grounds of the war with France, on which (although I was perfectly ſatisfied both as to its juſtice and neceſſity) ſuch various and oppoſite ſentiments were entertained. It gave the people an opportunity of taſting thoſe imagined ſweets which they fooliſhly conceived muſt be the conſequence of peace *on any terms*; and which, on that account, they had been ſo clamorous to obtain. It, at the ſame time, demonſtrated to them the error of their expectations. It proved to them, in the plaineſt way, the abſolute *impoſſibility* of maintaining any relations of amity or reconciliation with the government of France, as it was then conſtituted; and the abſolute *neceſſity* of again oppoſing it, to preſerve their independence. The ſenſe of danger vibrated through every quarter of the land. The impulſe, like the electric ſhock, was felt ſimultaneouſly. The call of duty, of honour, of patriotiſm, beat high in every breaſt. No exertion was thought too active; no privation, no ſacrifice, too great. The olive withered in the hand which again graſped the ſword, and the youth of Britain

flocked round the throne of a patriot king. They offered themſelves as an armour of defence to the wants of the ſtate. Never was a purer fervour, a ſincerer devotion, a ſtronger feeling of public magnanimity teſtified, than that which at this critical juncture was diſplayed by the voluntary effuſions of this great country. It came home to every Britiſh boſom. It proved that the old ſtock of Britiſh virtue, which our illuſtrious anceſtors had engrafted on the genuine tree of liberty, was neither exhauſted nor impaired; and that in ſpite of all the ſilly experiments which had been made to improve or vitiate its growth, its native vigour had reſiſted the impreſſion, and it ſtill flouriſhed in full purity and health.

I have been aſtoniſhed at the ridicule and levity with which the volunteers have frequently been treated, and that amidſt the graveſt deliberations, and by men from whom one would not have expected ſuch fooliſh or ſuch malicious irony. There may be different and more efficient modes reſpecting their organization, but that does not in the leaſt detract from *their* merit, which I muſt ever inſiſt has a full claim to the gratitude of the community.

The want of an advantage often ſtrikes the perceptions of mankind more forcibly than its poſſeſſion; and the utility of a meaſure is frequently moſt plainly demonſtrated by its oppoſite. For the

the ſake of argument, therefore, I will put a caſe, and ſuppoſe that a contrary ſpirit had manifeſted itſelf. That this zeal, inſtead of declaring in favour of the government, had declared againſt it. What would, under ſuch circumſtances, have become of the commonwealth, under the guidance of a feeble adminiſtration, reduced as our regular troops and militia then were? The very idea makes one ſhudder through every fibre. Let not then theſe worthy and uſeful citizens be traduced or underrated. The very declaration of their ſentiments, and the alacrity with which they offered their ſervices, firſt gave confidence to the ſtate; and, in ſpite of the romances or invectives of ſome, or the vulgar and abſurd ſcurrility of others, the country acknowledges the obligation. Far be it from me to attempt to compare them with regular troops. They cannot be expected to poſſeſs their ſcience or their ſkill. But ſtill their immenſe numbers, animated by their courage and zeal, in which they are not deficient, would make great amends for defect in diſcipline; and ſhould their ſervices be ever required, they will not diſappoint public expectation.

Zeal is aſſuredly one of the firſt qualifications of a ſoldier; and, when it urges on a people to the defence of their native ſoil, we almoſt uniformly find it an overmatch for every impediment.

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Where true patriotiſm prevails, every citizen communicates the ſum of his faculties to the aggregate force of the ſtate. He ſhares in its dangers and its ſucceſs. Almoſt every country is equal to its defence, when that defence has been once firmly reſolved on; and a nation of freemen is not to be conquered by myriads of invaders. When ſoldiers are inſpired by a ſenſe of duty, and a genuine love of glory and independence, they readily imbibe the diſcipline of war, and are eaſily trained to the duties and hardſhips of camps.

Theſe maxims were moſt incontrovertibly proved, in antient times, by the Grecian and Roman ſtates; in modern times, by Switzerland and Holland; and, in our own times, by America and France. What was it in theſe countries, at all theſe different eras, that inſured ſucceſs, but the voluntary ſpirit of the people? It prevailed over all the regular veterans that could be brought againſt them. National ſpirit and unanimity are, in fact, the ground-work of all effectual reſiſtance. Every thing elſe follows. Soldiers, fired by that feeling, engage with an intrepidity which nothing can daunt. As to the idea that none can be good ſoldiers but thoſe who have ſeen ſervice, this is a propoſition which every year's experience totally diſproves. Men frequently behave as gallantly the firſt time they go into action as the moſt ve-

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teran troops. Were it otherwiſe, it would conſiderably diminiſh the uſe and efficiency of our regular army. Not being a continental power, our ſoldiers have not the frequent opportunities which are afforded to other ſoldiers of mingling in battle; yet, when they do engage, they have ſeldom been found the laſt at attack, or the firſt at retreat. Soldiers are no doubt improved, in certain reſpects, like men in other profeſſions, by practice. Still the foundation of a military character is courage and zeal, qualities which are the effect of nature and civil education: the reſt is acquired by a very ſhort apprenticeſhip. I am here ſpeaking of ſoldiers, not officers—whoſe qualifications are infinitely more complicated, and muſt be the reſult of genius, application, and a long ſource of practical and theoretical knowledge combined. If, therefore, our ſoldiers be commanded by ſkilful officers, they may again be victorious, as they have often before been, the firſt time they fleſh their ſwords. I do not, therefore, as far as the ſafety of the commonwealth is concerned, look at the black ſide of things—on the contrary, I look at the bright ſide, and fully expect that the wreath of conqueſt and glory will continue to adorn our warriors' brows. Let us, however, as I propoſed, ſee what has been

already

already done, and on that foundation rear the fabric of future hope.

If we have not been able to land armies on the Continent of Europe; to cruſh the progreſs of French extortion; and to ſnatch the neighbouring ſtates from their ruinous connexion with France; as far as our power and influence extend, as far as has depended on the means of this country, we have neither been idle nor unſucceſsful. The influence of France on the Continent muſt always be greater than that of England. She is a military empire, ſituated in the very centre of continental action. Her very poſition and population muſt ever rank her among the leading ſtates; and, humbled as ſhe has been at particular periods, ſhe has always regained her equipoiſe. Our influence is derived from leſs direct ſources; but, on that very account, our interference muſt be generally ſerviceable, and can never be dangerous, to the balance of power*. Throughout our hiſtory

* France, particularly ſince the revolution, has been continually making a violent outcry againſt us as the monopolizers of the world; and has been endeavouring to divert the contemplation of Europe from her own ambitious projects, by exciting jealouſy againſt what ſhe is pleaſed to term the deſpotiſm of our commercial and naval greatneſs. Theſe charges, which, under the auſpices of the French government, were a few years back urged by Hauterive, with ſome plauſibility, were

tory for the laſt three hundred years, we have ſeldom been oppoſed to France in continental war, but when France has been aiming at the ſubverſion of the general liberties of Europe.

As however we ſtand more immediately oppoſed in rivality to France, we have wounded her in her moſt vital intereſts. We have nearly annihilated her navy and her commerce, thoſe abun-

were completely exposed and refuted in Mr. Gentz's most able answer. He has plainly shewn, that our commercial and naval greatness, instead of being detrimental, are highly advantageous to Europe, as they have enabled us to keep pace with the great continental powers, and frequently to interfere with success in the preservation of the political balance. That balance which has been often preserved, but was never endangered by us, continued secure till the continental aggrandisement of France completely overset it. Here then, in her own actual example, is a complete exposition of the futility and falsehood of the charges which have been brought against us. In all our political concerns, particularly for the last 150 years, the grand object of all our alliances has been to sustain the balance of power. France, on the contrary, has been ever aiming to subvert it, and from the blindness, credulity, and pusillanimity of other states, she has at length effected her design. Our long contest with Louis the XIVth, was to prevent the junction of the French and Spanish monarchies. Our assistance of the king of Prussia, in the seven years' war, was to curb the preponderating power of Austria. In both instances we assisted the weak against the strong, and in both instances were successful.

dant ſources of power and wealth. The very remnant of her once potent marine, which, in better days, was able, in ſome degree, to contend with the fleets of Britain, is, to all intents and purpoſes, completely ruined. Ever ſince Lord Nelſon's deciſive victory, which ſtruck a damp into the heart of every mariner of France, ſhe has never ventured to ſhow herſelf as a naval power, and, indeed, for the greateſt part of the time, has tamely allowed herſelf to be blocked up in her own ports by Britiſh ſquadrons. Ships ſhe ſtill has, but in a few years more, there will ſcarcely be a ſailor in France who has ever been at ſea. We have abſolutely thrown up an entrenchment round her coaſt, which confines her at home, and the manœuvres of her ſhips are circumſcribed to her own harbours.*

But

* The Rochfort squadron, it appears, has at last made its escape. About its force and destination a variety of opinions is entertained. In all probability, however, it has steered its course for the East Indies. Our East India fleet is on the point of sailing, and they may be looking out for an opportunity of retrieving, in some measure, the disgrace which attended Linois. If they cruise from eighteen to twenty degrees of west longitude, they will be almost certain of falling in with our trade, as that is the track which our ships always steer, and of which they cannot be ignorant, from our nautical publications. The Bengal fleet, worth at least 1,500,000l.

But what can be the notions of ſailors, (if ſuch they can be termed) whoſe experience and practical knowledge are ſo cloſely tied up? They may, to be ſure, as often as they pleaſe, ſmell their own powder, and liſten to the report of their own guns. In their excurſions and tacks, within the circumference of their own ports, they may reef topſails, and lower yards, at their leiſure, and, in the event of ſqualls or tempeſtuous weather, they may find ſoundings, and diſcover good anchorage, without the riſk of ſhipwreck. This may be all very pretty ſhow, and, on the ſcore of amuſement, may be ranked with the dances and ſongs of their operas, the ridiculous buffooneries of their little theatres, or the gimcracks, and gewgaws, and nonſenſical and vulgar parade, of their coronations. But what can be hoped for by the wildeſt ſpeculators, ſhould they venture to encounter us on that element which is now peculiarly our own; to wage war with thoſe hardy veterans who, for the laſt twelve years, have been braving every danger,

1,500,000l. is now lying at Portsmouth, waiting for a wind, and seven more large ships, for China, whose cargoes may be estimated at 1,400,000l. are appointed to sail in March. How far it may be adviseable, supposing we hear nothing of the Rochfort squadron, to send a force sufficient for their protection to the above particular situation, I leave to government to determine.

and ploughing the main in every latitude without a competitor? We might now, with ſome plea of propriety, affix Van Tromp's broom to the maſt head, for we have abſolutely ſwept the ſeas of every opponent, and the Britiſh flag, in every quarter of the globe, rides decidedly triumphant. Even our loaded merchantmen, as has been lately moſt proudly proved, are an overmatch for French ſhips of war.

No circumſtance could have ſo potently tended to ſink the French marine into abſolute contempt as the brilliant event, which, in the month of February, 1804, took place between the India ſhipping and the French ſquadron under Linois. This admiral, in the ſervice of France, was abſolutely beaten off, and compelled to fly before a fleet of heavily laden trading ſhips, of whoſe ſailing he had received intelligence; which he had been even lying wait for, to capture; which he deſignedly fell in with; and which was only ſaved by their bravery and his cowardice. If the caſe had been reverſed, the ſquadron Britiſh, and the merchantmen French, we may, I think, venture to aſſert, that every one would have been taken or ſunk.

To India and America we can turn with ſatisfaction on our military exploits. In the former country the French party has been completely ſuffocated,

cated, and we have juſt concluded a moſt brilliant war, by the deſtruction of the Mahratta confederacy. We have added immenſe territories to our former dominions; and, whilſt the French have been entirely expelled, we have, by our freſh acquiſitions, firmly eſtabliſhed our empire in that quarter. In this ſenſe only have the additional provinces which we have gained been conſequential. Our territorial poſſeſſions in India are certainly a loſing concern, but our trade is of immenſe importance; and whatever tends to its extenſion or ſecurity muſt be regarded as a national benefit.

In the Weſt Indies we have already nearly recovered by our arms what an incautious negotiation had too eaſily ceded. St. Lucia, Tobago, Demerara, Surinam, Berbice, Iſſiquibo, St. Pierre, and Miquelon, are again ours. From St. Domingo, the trade of which formerly produced to France an annual profit of 3,000,000l. ſterling, the French are finally driven, without the hope of return. The miſerable remnant of Rochambeau's army, which ſailed from Europe 60,000 ſtrong, was ſaved from the fury of the natives by the humanity of the Britiſh, who carried them off in their ſhips, and who, for this act of kindneſs, were repaid by the blackeſt ingratitude. Touſſaint was intrapped, and baſely ſuffered to periſh in the dungeons of France; but Deſſalines has been more

wary.

wary. Like Bonaparte in Europe, he has been alſo inveſted with the purple; and in their deſcent, their cruelties, and their uſurpations, as well as their imperial titles, they are worthy rivals.

Thus, although the coloſſal ſway of this European upſtart be ſtill flouriſhing on the continent of Europe, from the other three quarters of the globe he is literally baniſhed. His name and his power are alike deſpiſed. They are a dead letter; and French influence is as unfelt in thoſe regions, as that of the petty princes of the interior of Africa is unknown to us.

With all this humiliating defalcation of political conſequence, the commerce of France is alſo extinct. Thoſe myriads of ſhips, which, under the protection of a well-appointed and warlike navy, formerly covered the ſeas, and crowded the havens of France; which, whilſt they ſerved as an ample nurſery for ſeamen, were employed in the tranſportation of the immenſe produce of her colonies; which enabled her to carry on a prodigious and moſt lucrative traffic to the Eaſt and Weſt Indies, America, Africa, the Levant, the Mediterranean, the Baltic, and all the maritime ſtates of Europe, bringing home raw materials for which ſhe bartered the growth or the manufactures of her own country, diffuſing opulence and induſtry, vigour and happineſs, through every province,

vince, are now rotting in idleneſs at home. All theſe prolific ſources of proſperity, and the innumerable currents which branched from them, have been cut off by the interference and ſuperiority of Britain. And is this to have accompliſhed nothing? People, however, are not wanting who ſtill pertinacioufly maintain this ſolecifm—and, by the promulgation of their falſe prophecies, derived from a ſpurious parentage, ſtrive to generate diſcontent, and to throw a damp on the generous ardour of the country. But it has, I hope, been unanſwerably ſhown, that this language, however it may apply to France, is totally inapplicable to Britain; and that theſe accuſations, as far as we are concerned, are as malicious as they are prepoſterous and falſe.

A new enemy has juſt entered the liſt againſt us, and the antient connexion between France and Spain has been actively revived, on, however, very different principles, and under very different auſpices, from the old family compact. Unhappy Spain, how muſt thou feel thyſelf fallen from thine antient grandeur, to be reduced to the pitiable neceſſity of forming an alliance with a government which has cut off the elder branch of thy family from one of the moſt ſplendid thrones in Europe, and which is preparing the ſame ſad deſtiny for thee; whoſe hands are ſtill red with the blood

of

of thy neareſt relatives; and whoſe mind would fain embrue them in thine own! And againſt what power art thou arming? Againſt the only one that has had the fortitude and generoſity to fight for the cauſe of humanity, to withſtand the torrent, which, without its oppoſition, would have, long ſince, ingulphed Europe, and have overſet every throne and altar which ſtill remain.

Much has been ſaid about the juſtice, much about the policy of the conduct of this country towards Spain. I can perceive no intricacy whatever in the ſolution of this problem; and when the queſtion is diſencumbered of thoſe extraneous appendages with which it has been ſurcharged, it becomes ſo clear, that all thoſe heavy accuſations, which have been ſo falſely and maliciouſly urged againſt the Britiſh government, inſtantly fall to the ground.

By the treaty of St. Ildefonſo, which was ſigned by France and Spain in the month of Auguſt 1796, an offenſive and defenſive alliance was mutually entered into, binding the contracting parties, in caſe of future war, to aſſiſt each other with a certain contingent of men and ſhips. Thus much Spain acknowledges in her manifeſto, but endeavours to evade the reſponſibility neceſſarily attaching to ſuch an engagement, by declaring

ing that ſhe neither provided the one nor the other, but paid inſtead an equivalent in money, and thus preſerved her neutrality*.

Now let us for a moment examine this curious mode of reaſoning. It is very evident, that, by the ſtipulations of the treaty alluded to, whatever the amount of the contingent might be, the moment France and we became belligerents, oppoſed to each other, Spain, unleſs at our requiſition ſhe formally and explicitly renounced her engagement with France, became a party againſt us, and might fairly have been conſidered and treated by us as an enemy. But let us attend to the futility of the explanation. What does an equivalent mean, but ſomething of equal value, as the very term denotes, to the party that requires the fulfilment of a contract? The French, conducted as their government has long been, are not a people diſpoſed to make abatements, or to ſhrink from a legal demand, eſpecially when it is due from a ſtate that dreads their interference, and pays an implicit obedience to their commands. France, when firſt ſhe applied to Spain, wanted neither men, nor ſhips, but *money*—at leaſt it was for money that ſhe was moſt immediately diſtreſſed, to meet her urgent exigencies; to continue on foot

* See the Declaration of War by Spain, dated Madrid, December 14, 1804.

her immenſe eſtabliſhments; to feed the rapacity of men in power; to defray the extravagant expences of an upſtart court; and to prepare for the magnificence of an approaching coronation. Are we then to conſider this money, which, to all intents and purpoſes, was a war ſubſidy; which both the French and Spaniards regard as tantamount to other ſpecial engagements; and which the French themſelves admit to be a full and ample fulfilment of the term of a warlike coalition, as a totally innoxious proviſion?

But this was by no means the only cauſe of diſſatisfaction and diſpute. Independently of theſe pecuniary ſupplies, I can aver from facts, ſome of which fell under my own obſervation, that, from the moment of the renewal of hoſtilities between France and this country, Spain was, till within the laſt few months, committing direct and poſitive acts of ſyſtematic warfare againſt us; not in a ſolitary inſtance, not as an exception againſt a general rule, but as a rule almoſt without an exception.

It is notorious to every one, who, ſince the breaking out of the preſent war, has been in the Mediterranean, or in countries adjacent to that ſea, that every Spaniſh port, which is convenient for the purpoſe, has teemed with French privateers. Theſe privateers were, in many inſtances, partly

partly manned by Spaniards, Spaniards having ſhares in them, and enjoyed the protection of the Spaniſh government. They were continually on the watch in their lurking places, to which they had free acceſs at all times, and in all ways. They were ſupplied with every want, whether of proviſions or naval ſtores; and remained there any length of time; making captures indifferently on the open ſeas or within the boundaries of neutrality, and bringing in their prizes, where both ſhip and cargo were regularly condemned. The property thus illegally ſeized and diſpoſed of, if it ſuited the Spaniſh market, was ſold there; if otherwiſe, it was diſtributed among Spaniſh coaſters, and conveyed, under the protection of the Spaniſh flag, to France, or to any other more profitable or commodious port. Nor was this pernicious ſyſtem confined to Europe. In the Weſt Indies it was puſhed to ſtill further extremities, to the great annoyance and injury of our colonial trade. In the iſland of Cuba, not only were prizes condemned, but a French expedition was fitted out, under the auſpices of the Spaniſh governor, againſt the Bahamas, which was only abandoned in conſequence of the death of Noailles, the French general, who had been appointed to the command.* Were Britiſh privateers allowed to

* See governor Halkett's letters to lord Hobart, dated from Bahamas, in February and April 1804 (Nos. 26, 27, and 28, of

aſſemble in the ſame manner; to remain the ſame time; to diſpoſe of prizes in the ſame way; or to partake of any of the ſame privileges? notoriouſly not! Was not this then another ſhameful breach of neutrality, and, if we had choſen to make it ſo, another fair cauſe of war?

A third ground of war was the permiſſion granted by the court of Spain for the paſſage of French marines and ſailors, through the Spaniſh territory, to man a French ſquadron of ſhips which was lying at Ferrol, and which was then watched by a Britiſh ſquadron of inferior force. We ſuſtained a ſerious injury by this permiſſion, as it enabled the French to ſtrengthen their force, rendered them more equal to oppoſe us, and gave them a better chance of defeating our vigilance, and effecting their object, which was to form a junction with the Toulon fleet. Was not this therefore a flagrant departure from neutrality?

A fourth cauſe of war aroſe, when the French, notwithſtanding theſe ſupplies, fearing ſtill that they might be unequal in a conteſt with the ſuperior ſkill and courage of Britiſh ſailors, prevailed on Spain to fit out her own ſhips, not only in Ferrol but in other ports, probably to attack the Britiſh fleet in conjunction with the French: at

the papers laid before Parliament on the 2nd and 4th of February) confirming this account.

all

all events to overawe it, and to oblige it to quit an advantageous ſtation. Was not this alſo a poſitive breach of neutrality?*

But all the above acts, violent and flagrant as they are, were apparently only an introduction to ſtill more deciſive meaſures. By the eleventh article of the treaty in queſtion, in addition to the forces which had been ſpecially agreed on, in caſe they ſhould be inſufficient, it is farther covenanted, that "the two contracting powers ſhall put on foot the greateſt forces they poſſibly can, as well by ſea as by land, againſt the enemy of the power attacked."† Here then is a complete end to all qualification, and the treaty goes the whole length of the moſt violent ſtate of hoſtility in which an enemy can be placed. The tenour and ſpirit of this treaty are alſo peculiarly offenſive and ſcandalous, as they take from the parties all right of judgment reſpecting the juſtice or legality of war. The ſuccours furniſhed are to be placed entirely at the diſpoſal of the requiring power, without being obliged to give any account of the motives by which it may have been determined.‡ Is this then to be regarded as a treaty indifferent or innoxious to us?

* By referring to the papers presented to Parliament on the 24th of Jan. from Nos. 29 to 38, both inclusive, these points are ſufficiently evident.

† See Treaty of Ildefonso. ‡ See article 7 of the same treaty.

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We muſt here go a little into the principles of the law of nations, as they have been authorized by cuſtom, and as they are ſupported by the opinions of the moſt eminent juriſts. By this whole maſs of authority, it has ever been admitted as an incontrovertible doctrine, founded on natural right, and confirmed by the uniform practice of civilized governments, that any hoſtile proviſion againſt any particular ſtate challenges explanation; and, if explanation be obſtinately evaded, or peremptorily refuſed, notice of the conſequences having been given, is a cauſe of immediate war. It certainly very often has occurred, that men and money both, have been furniſhed by a ſtate calling itſelf neutral to a belligerent, in conſequence of a previous, or temporary treaty; and that this aid, ſo furniſhed, has not led to hoſtility. Switzerland, for example, and ſeveral of the ſmaller ſtates of Germany have, in moſt continental wars, for the laſt two hundred years, been more or leſs in the habit of hiring out ſubſidiary troops. But are we thence to infer, that this practice has, by any interpretation or conſtruction which the law of nations will bear, been admitted as a legitimate meaſure? This muſt be either conventional; or it has been tolerated from a conſideration of the weakneſs, or want of political importance, of the ſtate ſo aſſiſting; from convenience, not neceſſity; from expediency,

diency, not right. It is very evident that a ſtate aiding another at open war, from that moment departs from its neutrality, and expoſes itſelf to the plenary conſequences of ſuch a departure. But whether the party thus injured, and againſt whom the aſſiſtance is provided, ſhall conſider the aggreſſion as the ground on which he ſhould reſiſt, muſt be entirely matter of feeling; muſt depend on his ſenſe of the injury and his means of chaſtiſement.

The *right*, however, to prevent an aid ſo adminiſtered is incontrovertible. Were it otherwiſe, it would long ſince have been ſpecifically defined to what extent particular ſtates might aſſiſt each other without forfeiting the rights and privileges of neutrals. If ſuch a line be not previouſly ſettled, where or how are the limitations to be drawn? If Spain, for inſtance, may, without riſk or cenſure, furniſh France with fifteen ſhips of the line, and 24,000 troops (the number ſtipulated), why may ſhe not, with the ſame impunity, furniſh thirty ſail of the line and 50,000 men; and, if theſe, why not her whole military and naval force?* But who will pretend to ſay that an enormous ſum of money, (to the amount of many

* It has been shewn, that, if required, she was even bound to go to this extent.

millions

millions ſterling*) conſidered by the contracting parties as a full equivalent to the force agreed on, is not to be ſo regarded by us? The propoſition is perfectly abſurd, and, in every point of view, againſt nature, reaſon, and law.

If France and Spain, laying the terms of the treaty before us, had, at the time of its taking place, applied to us for our concurrence, and we had formally conſented, then, it is evident there would have been no ground of complaint. But if, from the mere circumſtance of ſuch a treaty having been acceded to, it were incumbent on every ſtate of Europe immediately to remonſtrate, and, in caſe of non-renunciation, to threaten attack, there would be no end of cavil and diſpute. No particular ſtate can previouſly know, for certain, that it will be affected by the proviſions of a treaty. Before its operation can be felt, hundreds of accidents may ariſe to ſeparate parties ſo bound down, or even to connect in alliance thoſe very parties to which it is apparently moſt adverſe. Such has been the practice and the public law of Europe for centuries paſt, and becauſe an inſolent upſtart, ſetting at defiance the opinions both of paſt and preſent times, has, in its moſt ſacred

* Three millions ſterling, it ſeems, was the ſum finally agreed on, considerably above a third of the whole revenue of the Spaniſh empire.

principles

principles, preſumed to violate it, are we to be guided by the varying and ambiguous rules of his new code? So far, therefore, for the *juſtice* of the caſe—let us now advert to the *policy*.

In this diſcuſſion two queſtions occur. The firſt is, whether it be our intereſt to tolerate, in any degree, certain illegal acts on the part of Spain, which are highly advantageous to our enemies, and proportionally detrimental to us, and as ſuch muſt be conſidered as an egregious infringement of the radical principles of neutrality? The ſecond is, to what extent it may be our intereſt to permit ſuch proceedings to be carried on?

In the firſt caſe, unhappily ſituated as Spain is with regard to France, it is *perhaps* our *intereſt*, it has *certainly* been our *wiſh*, either to overlook, or to ſurvey with all poſſible mildneſs, particular acts of aggreſſion. We have not been haſty in binding her down to thoſe ſtricter regulations, the obſervance of which we might have felt inclined to enforce, had ſhe been the abſolute miſtreſs of her own meaſures, and in full exerciſe of her independence. Under ſuch unfortunate circumſtances, we may be eaſily ſuppoſed to have imagined, that the *will* did not accompany the *deed*; and that therefore, acting with reluctance, ſhe acted in ſome meaſure without effect, and with as little detriment to us as ſhe could poſſibly con-

trive. It muſt, in ſuch inſtances, be regarded as the preponderance of an enemy operating on the means of a friend, with whom ſtill reſides the chief diſpoſal of thoſe means, and who, conſequently, will employ them as ſparingly, and render them as little miſchievous, as the nature of things will admit. Thus unfortunately circumſtanced, a ſtate may have ſome claim to indulgence, and ſuch indulgence has, in the inſtance before us, been moſt liberally beſtowed.

I now come to the conſideration of the ſecond queſtion.

Finding that the injuries which we ſuſtained in conſequence of the conduct of Spain, by increaſing, became more inconvenient, we, in a political point of view, were at laſt reduced to a ſimple arithmetical calculation. It became our buſineſs to aſcertain what portion of this kind of hoſtility it was wiſer to bear, than by interference, or poſitive controul, to run the riſk of forcing a cloſer connexion, and of throwing the aggregate means of oppoſition or attack into the ſame ſcale.

We can eaſily imagine a point on which ſuch a queſtion may balance, and the government of a country heſitate which ſide to prefer. But when the queſtion is reduced to this extreme nicety, a very little additional aggreſſion muſt be neceſſary to ſettle the doubt. England and Spain have, for

ſome

ſome time paſt, been ſtanding in this critical predicament. Since the very commencement of the war, Spain, as we have ſhewn, has been committing daily certain hoſtile acts, which, on our part, would have fully juſtified repriſals and war. But not being deſirous, on various accounts, of puſhing her to extremities, our convenience and humanity were coincident. We thought it both more wiſe and more generous to tolerate a conduct which was liable to much reproach to her, and attended with conſiderable injury to us, rather than that her entire reſources ſhould be thrown into the hands of France. This was a forbearance by which it was natural enough for us to be actuated, whilſt governed by a policy which was under the influence of great delicacy and moderation, and equally removed from the incitements of reſentment or revenge: and this was the line of conduct which we adopted. But when we plainly perceived that ſhe was forming a cloſer alliance, and entering into ſtronger engagements, with France; that ſhe was not only furniſhing a ſtipulated or a temporary ſum, but that the total produce of her mines was tranſmitted almoſt untouched to the treaſury of France; that the number of French privateers in Spaniſh ports, which not only met with a ſafe aſylum, but were fitted out with every convenience with the con-

ſent of the Spaniſh government, was daily increaſing; that the Spaniſh government had, at the requiſition of France, granted an unmoleſted paſſage to French troops through the Spaniſh territories, for the purpoſe of annoying us; that under various pretences, but with the greateſt activity, ſhe was carrying on conſiderable armaments in thoſe ports which were beſt adapted to injure us, and moſt likely to create ſuſpicion and give umbrage; that, on our preſenting remonſtrance on remonſtrance, all ſatisfactory explanation was either evaded or poſtponed; that on being warned, over and over again, of the inevitable conſequences of theſe equivocations, the ſame ſyſtem was more or leſs perſevered in; it ſurely was high time for us to feel ſome alarm, to ſuſpect an alienated or hoſtile mind, to inſiſt on immediate explanation, and, on that being refuſed, to quit our ſyſtem of moderation, to reſume thoſe rights which we had long allowed to ſleep, but had never relinquiſhed, and to retaliate by open war. This was what we were clearly authorized to do for our own reparation and ſecurity, and in conformity to the ſtrict letter of the practice and public law of the civilized world. As to the mere form of previouſly publiſhing a declaration, or recalling a miniſter, that is a matter of indifference, and the origin of wars for the laſt two centuries furniſhes

more

more precedents againſt than in favour of the rule.* The knowledge of our rights was matter of publicity to the whole world, and Spain had conveyed to her the moſt explicit aſſurances of our fixed intention, beyond a certain point of provocation, of abiding by them.†

But mark the delicacy, and caution, and unexampled forbearance, of the Britiſh government. Knowing that Spain had betrayed ſuch unequivocal diſpoſitions in favour of France, and that, in addition to theſe demonſtrations, ſerious armaments of a very ſuſpicious nature were going forward in her ports, at the very moment that the arrival of her galleons was expected from South America, which we were aware, if war were premeditated, would enable her to carry it on with redoubled vigour; mark, I ſay, the delicacy, the caution, and the unexampled forbearance, of Britain, in her endeavours to ſecure herſelf with as little injury to Spain as poſſible. That we did not wiſh to go to war with Spain in the firſt inſtance is very evident from the mildneſs and patience with which we overlooked her numerous aggreſſions; that we ſtill wiſhed to avoid it if

* Mr. Ward, in his very able pamphlet, has clearly proved these points from historical facts.

† See the papers laid before Parliament, *passim*.

poſſible,

poſſible, in the preſent inſtance, is as evident from the gentleneſs with which we inflicted corrective admonition. Finding that Spain ſtrove to perplex us by evading our inquiries, and that ſhe refuſed all direct explanation reſpecting her connexion with France, ſtill anxious to ſpare her, and to avoid meaſures of actual hoſtility, orders were diſpatched to our ſquadrons, cruizing off Ferol and Cadiz, to prevent any Spaniſh ſhips of war from leaving their ports, to intercept any treaſure ſhips which might fall in their way, and to detain them till certain doubtful points were cleared up; but not to detain any other deſcription of Spaniſh homeward-bound ſhips of war, and by no means to moleſt the Spaniſh trade.* This ſurely could only be intended as a meaſure of precaution, as it was very far within the limits of what we might, not only with juſtice, but with advantage and ſecurity, have enforced.

What then is the reaſon of all this clamour and outcry which have been raiſed againſt this meaſure? Is it becauſe it has been too ſevere, or too lenient? Let us go a little way back, and ſee what have been the ſentiments of other politicians, and the ſenſe of the nation, in parallel caſes, in other times? Did not the late Lord Chatham, that

* See No. 28 of the papers presented to Parliament on the 4th of January.

eminent

eminent and patriotic ſtateſman, throw up his ſeat in the cabinet on being oppoſed in a queſtion ſomething ſimilar, but of infinitely more intricacy and delicacy than this? Was not Lord North univerſally condemned, and even threatened with impeachment, for his culpable neglect in allowing the French, Dutch, and Spaniards, whilſt making pacific profeſſions, to carry on their armaments without remonſtrance, and to ſail without explanation? Was not Mr. Addington highly blamed, by a powerful party of the preſent day, for not declaring war at once with Spain the moment that we were at war with France, knowing the connexion which ſubſiſted between the two countries, the abſolute dependence, ſince the year 1795, of Spain on France, and the conſequence which, ſooner or later, would be the inevitable reſult? Have not the Spaniards themſelves, within the laſt four-and-twenty years, on queſtions of an hundred times leſs provocation, importance, and embarraſſment, furniſhed two caſes directly in point, in the diſputes which aroſe relative to the Falkland Iſlands and Nootka Sound? The grounds are, in fact, incontrovertible as to *right*. The exerciſe of that right, therefore, became a ſimple queſtion of diſcretion and expediency. The government, after what had paſſed, had full liberty to proceed to any extremities of legitimate war,

and

and what fell ſhort of that exerciſe of power was matter of condeſcenſion, compaſſion, and forbearance, on their part.

Uſing thus their diſcretion, the orders reſpecting the detention of the regiſter ſhips were tranſmitted to our ſquadrons on the Spaniſh coaſt. The four frigates which were cruizing off Cadiz fell in, on the 5th of October, a few leagues from Cape St. Mary, with four ſhips that came under the denomination deſcribed. The captains of courſe did their duty, but deſirous of complying with their orders with all poſſible lenity, having acquainted the Spaniſh commanders with their object, they uſed every argument which they could ſuggeſt to induce them quietly to ſubmit. They told them that the two countries were not yet at war; that the matters in diſpute might yet be accommodated; that their orders were only a meaſure of precaution; and endeavoured to impreſs them with a conviction of the deſperate folly of contending with ſo ſuperior a force. This converſation laſted for near an hour before a ſingle gun was fired, but to no purpoſe. The Spaniards, when they found that they could not evade the blow, thought that their honour required that they ſhould not ſurrender without defence. One cannot find fault with their feelings. Our own officers would have acted in the ſame manner, and

and had it not been for the lamentable accident which happened to the Mercedes, the miſchief done, compared with the object at ſtake, would not have been conſiderable. But does the blowing up of the Mercedes in the leaſt affect the merits of the queſtion? It was a moſt unfortunate event, which we moſt ſincerely deplore, but which aroſe entirely from the careleſſneſs and confuſion which prevailed among her own crew.* It was a diſaſter that could not have been foreſeen, and that certainly could never have been intended. Are we then to be reproached with this fatal and melancholy cataſtrophe? It can only be regarded as one of thoſe contingencies in human affairs, which is a ſubject of grief, but not of condemnation, and on account of which no more blame or reſponſibility attaches to us than if it had never happened. Every exertion was made by our boats to ſave the lives of the ſurvivors, and every relief that could be provided, under ſuch afflicting circumſtances, was moſt cheerfully and humanely adminiſtered.

It is an accident, however, which has been made a handle of, both by the Spaniſh government, and by the enemies of our own govern-

* Such was the confuſion on board ſome of the Spaniſh ſhips, that, during the action, they fired ſeveral broadſides without ſhotting their guns.

ment, with as much virulence and indecency as if the inſtructions forwarded to our commanders had ſpecifically required the exploſion, and were conſequently anſwerable for the event. But ſurely nothing can be more unjuſt or more abſurd than theſe allegations. As well might the government be arraigned for any other poſſible misfortune which may ariſe in the execution of general orders. This meaſure was decided on, as the leaſt harſh. Merchant ſhips, and even ſhips of war, were ſtill allowed to paſs, and theſe treaſure ſhips, which belonged to the government, were only detained as a ſecurity for the conduct of Spain, under very ſuſpicious appearances: at a time too when, without ſcruple, we might have made them legal captures, and have extended the ſame ſeverity to every other deſcription of Spaniſh property.

Had the court of Spain explained its proceedings to our ſatisfaction, theſe ſhips would have been immediately reſtored, with every poſſible compenſation for the injury which they have ſuſtained; and if they had been finally forfeited in conſequence of their own fooliſh perverſeneſs, or lamentable imbecility, the fault is theirs, not ours. We ſtand compietely exonerated.* The lot of

* Every point of this queſtion has, at length, been moſt amply diſcuſſed in both houſes of Parliament, and all the arguments

Spain is indeed deplorable. Oppoſed by an open, but honourable, foe, and in league with a ſecret, but ſtill more formidable, one; aſſailed by peſtilence, famine, and rebellion; commencing a war with a revenue not adequate to the exigencies of her domeſtic government in peaceable times; her doom ſeems faſt approaching; and unleſs the magnanimous efforts of a ſtill warlike and high-minded, but oppreſſed and impoveriſhed people, can curb domeſtic treachery and intrigue, ſhake off the ſhackles of treacherous friendſhip, and conciliate the eſteem and goodwill of that power which has ſtill the capacity and the inclination to afford her ſubſtantial aſſiſtance, her fate is ſealed, and her monarchy obliterated. Would that I could conjure up that nice perception of honour, that noble feeling of national pride, that lofty ſpirit of independence, which has lately been ſo inſidiouſly invoked!* Would that the heroic mind of her old hereditary nobility could be, at this exigent moment, revived; that mind which, in ancient and better times, impregnated a whole nation, and whoſe impulſe gave birth to thoſe mighty efforts which reſcued Europe from a ſecond barbarian ſubjugation, and ſecured the triumph

arguments which have been adduced on either ſide have tended to confirm the opinion which I had originally formed.

* See the Prince of Peace's manifeſto.

of the croſs over the religion of Mahomet. How uſefully, how honourably, might this feeling be now employed. The modern Saracens are as fatal as thoſe of old, and the religion, the civil conſtitution, and the political independence of the community are threatened with a more deſolating yoke. Should this latent ſpirit rekindle, and urge on the nobles to an aſſumption of thoſe virtues which formerly ſo ſtrongly characteriſed them, one of their firſt meaſures would be to drive from the councils of their king an inſolent upſtart, who is univerſally deteſted and deſpiſed, whoſe ſimilar unlooked-for elevation ſtamps him the venal tool of Buonaparte, and who is laying them proſtrate before their bittereſt enemy.

A war with Spain is almoſt always a popular war, particularly with our navy, as little is to be apprehended from her exertions, and a rich harveſt is generally to be ſecured in prizes. In this view, therefore, it will give additional vigour to our vigilance, and enterpriſe.

About the conduct of the war, various opinions will no doubt be entertained. As an object of attack the Spaniſh poſſeſſions in South America ſeem to offer an alluring bait. The expulſion of the Spaniards from that continent might no doubt be eaſily effected. Their military force is ſmall. The remembrance of paſt, and the preſſure of preſent

ſent wrongs, are rankling in the breaſts of the natives; and the recorded misfortunes of Montezuma and Atahualpa are blended with the tortures of an inquiſitorial government. Still, with all theſe aids, we ſhould, I think, act more prudently in leaving them to the natural courſe of ſeparation, which, without our interference, will, in all probability, ſooner or later, take place between them and the mother country. We ſhould purſue a wiſer plan, by imitating the example of Drake, Anſon, Vernon, Pococke, and Rodney, and confining our hoſtile deſigns in thoſe quarters to occaſional attacks on the Havannah, Vera Cruz, and Carthagena, on their general commerce, and to the interruption of the register ſhips on their voyage home. Any attempt to diſpoſſeſs the Spaniards of their American empire, with the view of retaining a permanent poſſeſſion, would certainly, in ſome reſpects, be a hazardous, and in others, might prove a very pernicious, meaſure. We ſhould, indiſputably, endeavour to prevent it from falling under the domination of France; but of this there is little riſk. The ceſſion of Louiſiana has powerfully conduced to ſecure the mines of Potoſi and Peru from French cupidity. In the hands of the Spaniſh they are become, as far as their invigorating powers are concerned, a harmleſs poſſeſſion, adminiſtering to her exigencies without

without rendering her ſtrength formidable. Our own colonies are alſo ſufficiently extenſive, and the invaſion of theſe ſettlements might involve us in fatal diſputes with America, whoſe jealouſies would naturally be excited by ſeeing an active, powerful, and enterpriſing people eſtabliſhed in the vicinity of her ſouthern frontier.

I ſhall now take a curſory view of our domeſtic hiſtory, with which I ſhall conclude this work.

In ſpite of this protracted war, for the few months of anxious repoſe which intervened are hardly to be taken into account, this country may ſtill be conſidered in a flouriſhing condition. Convinced as we are of the abſolute neceſſity of patience and vigour, we contemplate our ſituation with thoſe generous feelings which determine us to ſacrifice every ſeemingly preſent advantage, in defence of laſting and more important future benefits. We feel that we are fighting for our independence, and our exiſtence as a nation. Thoſe inconveniences, therefore, which are the obvious and unavoidable reſult of this important ſtruggle, are cheerfully ſubmitted to; and the patriotiſm of the people keeps pace with the neceſſities of the times. Some, however, there are who are bent on complaint, and whoſe murmurs, with what motives it is not difficult to divine, are induſtriouſly circulated through the land. Increaſing exigencies

exigencies with exhauſted reſources, the uſual bugbears to terrify weak minds, are tricked out in every ſhape, and rendered more ludicrous by the glaring patchwork which envelopes them. But thoſe who diſmiſs ſuch counterfeit appearances, the creation of perverted or diſeaſed fancies, and diſdain to be miſled by the ſweeping reports of the diſaffected, the falſehoods of the factious, or the miſrepreſentations of the deſigning, may ſtill contemplate the real vigour and reſources of their country with confidence and conſolation.

It is, no doubt, the nature of war to increaſe the expenditure of the government, and to divert many of the uſual ſources of proſperity and wealth into unprofitable channels. This is an evil inſeparable from the conſtitution of hoſtile preparations. But when we are arguing this weighty queſtion, we muſt inveſtigate it in all its bearings, preſent as well as future, inherent as well as incidental. We muſt balance the poſitive and relative incumbrances againſt the probable and contingent evils.

If war were a mere matter of choice, the world would, in all likelihood, remain at eternal peace. But as it ariſes out of the paſſions and conflicting intereſts of mankind, and is frequently occaſioned by the pride and ambition, or by the arbitrary or inſidious deſigns of others, we muſt conſider, whether

whether it be better to ſurrender at once, or, by incurring temporary penalties and inconveniences, to ſecure permanent and ineſtimable bleſſings. This then is our preciſe predicament. We wiſh for peace; but, unleſs we can enjoy it with honour and ſecurity, we prefer war. Nor is it requiſite to appeal to the heated imaginations of mankind to procure this ſuffrage. It is a queſtion of ſober reaſon and common ſenſe, which at once comes home to the heart of every honeſt man, and to which, as ſoon as the propoſition is propounded, he aſſents.

Being thus neceſſarily engaged in war, not for conqueſt but for preſervation; not for ambition but for honour; our motives are as juſt as the cauſe is ſanctified. We have been abſolutely forced into this unfortunate ſtate by a profligate and perfidious foe, who, to gratify inordinate ambition, revenge, and other baſe paſſions, has long been ſecking to reduce us to a level with the powers that he has already enchained. We muſt, therefore, patiently endure what we cannot avert; and, attributing all our ſufferings to him, we muſt ſtrive to deviſe means, which, by reducing his power, will humble his pretenſions, and eventually lead to his confuſion and ruin. And in this conteſt we muſt not deceive ourſelves. We muſt not expect that it will be of ſhort duration. We muſt

bear

bear in mind that we have to wreſtle with no common enemy; but with one who has raiſed himſelf by the blackeſt crimes and the baſeſt ſubterfuges to the place which he has uſurped, and which he can only hope to preſerve by a repetition of the ſame flagitious acts. It has, nevertheleſs, hitherto been moſt ſatisfactorily proved, notwithſtanding his threats, his inclinations, and his means, that to attack us is beyond the audacity of his daring, or the boundaries of his power.

If, therefore, it be his deſign to ſtand merely on the defenſive, and to convert the war into a war of finance, ſo that it is to be finally decided by the ſtouteſt purſe, it is at leaſt fair to conjecture, that we, who are bleſſed with the moſt abundant reſources, ſhall be able to hold out the longeſt.

I have already ſhewn that the foreign trade of France is totally at a ſtand; that ſeveral of thoſe rich and flouriſhing colonies, which filled with their produce many hundred ſail of ſhips, are irrecoverably loſt; and that the interior trade and manufactures, which formerly afforded another very material branch of revenue, are in a moſt miſerable and mutilated ſtate. With theſe ſerious defalcations, the diſburſements muſt be increaſed in a tenfold proportion. The vaſt eſtabliſhments which are kept on foot; the exceſſive profuſion and prodigality which pervade every department; the

ſyſtem which is invariably adopted by men who fill the higheſt offices, of amaſſing enormous wealth by peculating on the public; the largeſſes diſtributed to the troops, who are kept together by theſe waſteful indulgences, and not by a ſenſe of diſcipline, duty, or affection; and the laviſh luxury of a muſhroom court, which is aiming to bribe the people to allegiance by the coſtly tinſel of public ſhows: all theſe extravagances abſorb the reſources of a ſtate.

When ſuch ſtatements are made, people naturally aſk,—if they be true? They naturally enquire, how things can go on at all which are conducted on ſuch principles, and which muſt be radically tending to their own ruin? But that ſuch is the caſe there can be no doubt. They have hitherto eſcaped their own deſtruction by the deſtruction of others. If we look at the deſolate, impoveriſhed, and exhauſted condition of ſome of the moſt fertile and flouriſhing regions of the continent, the myſtery is unravelled. A man, with a rental of five thouſand a year, can contrive to ſpend ten thouſand a year for fourteen years to come. So it has been with ſpendthrift France: intereſt and principal have been conſumed. When this ſtock was exhauſted, the wealth of individuals was appropriated to the ſame uſe which ſhe had before made of the wealth of the nation; and, when this

fund

fund failed, ſhe had recourſe to the ſame arbitrary meaſures in dependent and foreign ſtates. Plunder, by loans, by forced contributions, and by more violent robbery, has been extorted from all ranks, in all proportions, and in every way. France herſelf, and every country within her devouring graſp, have been drained of their wealth and their produce in aid of her boundleſs profuſion. The ſtate purveyors ſweep indiſcriminately into their treaſuries every thing that the prying eye of examination, or the groſs voracity of appetite, can detect; and when affairs can no longer go on even in this way, a bankruptcy is declared; the old ſcore is wiped off; a new ſet of books is purchaſed; and the accounts are begun anew. The capital of Holland, within the laſt twelve years, has been completely exhauſted, and, wherever the French have been maſters, the ſame outrageous exaction has been practiſed. The point of the bayonet, which is on all occaſions preſented, ſubdues the feeble voice of complaint, and fortunate is the trembling ſuppliant who, having murmured, eſcapes with life. But this ſyſtem of terror and injuſtice, however it may ſtifle the voice, cannot be perſiſted in, without making that kind of deep and durable impreſſion on the feelings of the ſufferers, which is ſufficient to ſhake, and, in due time, to ſubvert, the moſt formidable deſpotiſm

that ſucceſsful tyranny ever eſtabliſhed. This period, which has already been far too much prolonged, may be ſtill deferred, but that it will arrive the moment there is a well grounded hope of ſucceſs, I am firmly convinced.

Whilſt, however, the deſpot of France preſerves his ill-gotten power by ſuch conſiſtent means, how ſatisfactory is it to reflect that the Britiſh government has been able to put forth an energy, more than capable of counteracting all his inſidious machinations and ambitious projects againſt this country; and that this important object has been effected without departing from the principles of the conſtitution, or deviating from any of the regular and uſual modes of providing for the exigencies of the ſtate! Our taxes are great, but they are impoſed, through the Parliament, by the voice of the people, and happily the increaſing wealth of the community enables us to ſupport them without much diſtreſſing inconvenience.

In this country the public ſpirit and cheerful alacrity of the inhabitants are ten times more productive than all the ſummary and vexatious procedures to which deſpotiſm can reſort. Two exuberant ſprings, which have totally failed in France, have united to produce theſe favourable diſpoſitions in the Britiſh people, and to furniſh theſe inexhauſtible means to the Britiſh government.

A free

A free people identify themſelves with the government of which they are an eſſential and vital part. They are anxious to ſupport thoſe laws from which their happineſs, their proſperity, their freedom, and their ſtrength principally flow. The good faith with which the government acquit themſelves of their engagements, alſo creates an unbounded confidence with monied men; and whilſt it proves the unſhaken ſtability of their means, furniſhes a rapid proviſion to their wants. The punctuality with which the dividends on the national debt are paid; the proſperous ſtate of that debt from the increaſing operation of the ſinking fund; the high price of the ſtocks; and the flouriſhing condition of our manufactures and commerce; theſe all combine moſt powerfully to make us look at our finances without the ſlighteſt feeling of diſmay.

Notwithſtanding all the efforts, all the arts, and all the malignity of our enemy, who has been long buoyed up with the expectation that our reſources would fail, the duration of the conteſt, inſtead of augmenting our fears, has only confirmed our opinion of their ſecurity. Particular branches of commerce, particular branches of manufacture, have, no doubt, met with interruption. We muſt not, however, in any national computation, look to particularities, but to the ſum total. Particular deſcriptions of individuals may ſuffer from the wiſeſt

wiſeſt political inſtitutions, but that ſurely can be no argument againſt ſuch eſtabliſhments. With an enlightened government, the convenience and proſperity of the great body of the nation muſt be the only object of ſolicitude, and to that object every other conſideration muſt yield. We muſt, therefore, in commerce, as well as in every thing elſe, be guided by the aggregate amount; and, in this reſearch, if we conſult the books at the cuſtom-houſe and the exciſe-office, we ſhall have no reaſon for lamentation.* Fluctuations will ariſe in the moſt tranquil times: theſe will be increaſed by a ſtate of hoſtility; but, notwithſtanding the clamours of particular people, there can be no poſſible doubt that the trade of this country has been conſiderably extended by the ſtrange circumſtances of this extraordinary war; and for this evident reaſon:—France and Holland, two of the leading commercial ſtates of Europe, and our principal rivals, have been totally excluded from this profitable ſphere of action; and thoſe immenſe concerns, which were formerly

* What can be a stronger proof of this than those stupendous works which have been undertaken by the commercial members of the community, for the reception of their shipping from the different quarters of the globe? On the London Docks alone, upwards of 1,500,000l. has been already expended.

tranſacted

tranſacted by them, have fallen, in a great meaſure, into our hands. A conſiderable portion of this increaſed trade, we ſhall, no doubt, again loſe, whenever Europe ſhall be fortunately re-eſtabliſhed on its antient equilibrium. We ſhall, however, in that caſe, gain advantages in another way, of ten times more importance than any which can accrue from the profits of this accidental commerce; becauſe we ſhall then purſue what naturally belongs to our induſtry, our power, and our wealth, in the boſom of peace. Thus, I am not attempting to counterbalance the advantages derived from war by thoſe derived from peace, which, in every point of view, are of infinitely more value; I am only aiming to ſhew, how fortunate it is for us that, whilſt we are involved in hoſtilities, which no prudence could have avoided, we ſhould be furniſhed with ſuch additional reſources to enable us to carry them on.

Bonaparte may fulminate his anathemas; he may decree reſtraints, and interdict all commercial community with Great Britain and her dependencies; but I am ſatisfied that this ſhort-ſighted policy will recoil upon himſelf. It is decidedly an advantage to a country that thoſe commodities, which are become eſſential to its wants, ſhould be ſupplied from that ſource at which they can be procured on the moſt favorable terms. Britiſh goods

have

have not been received at the foreign markets of Europe from compulſion or from favour, but from intereſt. This preference has been occaſioned by the expertneſs of the workmanſhip, and the cheapneſs of the price, in which other nations have been but faint competitors. If they were to attempt to manufacture the ſame articles themſelves, not only would the quality be ten times worſe, but the price would be ten times dearer to the conſumer. It would reſemble a perſon, who, diſdaining to profit by the advantages which reſult from the diviſion of labour, ſhould reſolve to make every thing which he required, through all its ſtages, with his own hands. It is, therefore, evident that the wealth and labour of the country ſo diſpoſed would be unprofitably employed, in the exact proportion of the difference in quality and price. The balance would be a clear loſs. There are, indeed, ſo many channels for the application of human induſtry, invention, and ſpeculation, that thoſe purſuits which are moſt congenial to the natural inclinations or prejudices of the people, are almoſt always moſt beneficial to the ſtate. Our ſuperiority has been the growth of ages, and is to be attributed to a diffuſive combination of circumſtances, among which, our geographical poſition, our great capitals, our ſuperior induſtry, our experience, our addreſs, the ſtability of our merchants,

chants, and the national honour, are the moſt prominent. It may in time be conteſted, or ſupplanted, by the exertions of other ſtates. But things of this nature can never be forced with advantage: they muſt be allowed to take their courſe. Britiſh goods, therefore, in ſpite of the ordinances of Bonaparte, will continue to find their way to the great marts of Europe; and what contraband is unable to effect, will be covered by other leſs direct arts, at which the government, however vigilant or peremptory it may pretend to be, will, in the end, be compelled to connive. It is thus evidently more for his intereſt to allow the receipt of the regular duties, which, by a fair and open trade, would flow into his treaſury, than to provide for his wants by arming the rapacious hand of violence, or by vexatious regulations, to induce clandeſtine modes of ſupply, by which the revenue is injured, and the proſperity of the community moſt eſſentially deteriorated.

But although the means of this country be ſo abundant, it is to be hoped that ſome benefit will accrue from paſt experience; and that its ample reſources will be managed with that judicious frugality, which can alone remove all doubt of their duration, and make the people ſatisfied under their increaſing burdens. I believe that great and beneficial reforms are ſtill to be made in many of the

chief departments of the ſtate, and, little as I approved of Lord St. Vincent's general adminiſtration, whilſt he preſided at the Admiralty, I think that he has deſerved well of his country (although the mode might have been more conciliating) for that ſpirit of inveſtigation into enormous abuſes which he introduced, and which, I hope, with an impartial and moderate ſpirit, will be faithfully perſevered in.

The navy of Britain is certainly on a proud footing, and is faſt recovering from the effects of thoſe unwiſe and parſimonious regulations, which were adopted by the late board of Admiralty, and which, had they been perſiſted in, would have gone, even by this time, very far towards its ruin. But the error has been perceived, and has luckily been abandoned in time. Our dock-yards are again repleniſhed, and we ſhall at leaſt have ſome new ſhips to ſupply the place of the old, as they meet with accidents, or, by age, are rendered unfit for ſervice.* In ſuch a country as this, which owes

* It appears from the report made to the Admiralty in 1793, that the growth of timber has been very much neglected, and that it is failing faſt in this country. This is to be highly lamented, as no country produces finer timber for the conſtruction of ſhips of war. I have been informed, that fifty acres of land at forty trees an acre, and two loads of timber

owes ſo much to its naval ſuperiority, other ſacrifices muſt be ſubordinate. It never can anſwer ſuddenly to recede from the grand and liberal ſcale on which that noble eſtabliſhment has been long conducted. We ſhould find our artificers flocking to other countries for employment; the trade in naval ſtores would get into other hands; and, in the courſe of years, other navies more numerous and better appointed than our own, would be ſpringing up. For theſe cogent and palpable reaſons, we ſhould never ſuffer ourſelves to relax in thoſe meaſures which are calculated to inſure the pre-eminent proſperity of this great national bulwark. We muſt not, preſuming on the low ſtate to which the naval force of other countries is reduced, allow our own to decay: for it is to the peculiar attention which has been beſtowed on it, and the magnificent plan on which it has been conducted, that its preſent grandeur is to be entirely aſcribed. It has extended our dominion

ber from each tree, are necessary to build a seventy-four. At this rate, to build our present navy, which consists of about 600,000 tons of shipping, would require near 20,000 acres of wood of from 100 to 140 years' growth. There was, I think, formerly a regulation in France, obliging every person who cut down a full-grown tree, to plant three. This regulation might, with modifications, be beneficially pursued in some particular districts of this country.

and our fame, ; and it is the pride and ſecurity which we repoſe in its power, that have induced us to contribute ſo cheerfully to its ſupport. The inſtant the cultivation of it is neglected, it will begin to wither, and our feelings ſubſiding with the motives which feed them, may not be ſo eaſily revived. Our ſtock of ſhips, and ſtock of ſtores, muſt, therefore, be unremittingly kept up; for it is only by preſerving our navy where it is, that we can hope to retain that deciſive ſuperiority which places in our hands the deſtinies of half the globe.

With one hundred and eighty ſhips of the line; with frigates and ſmaller veſſels in proportion; with 120,000 ſailors diſtinguiſhed no leſs for their gallantry than their ſkill, and commanded by officers, every way worthy of ſuch a command; all that can be accompliſhed by men with ſuch a formidable force at their diſpoſal, may be confidently expected. There is no enterpriſe however daring, no ſervice however tedious, no exploit however hazardous, that is not embarked in with alacrity, by the courage, the patience, and the activity, of theſe intrepid guardians of their country. In every climate, in every zone, the Britiſh flag is triumphant; in every conflict it is victorious; in almoſt every undertaking it is ſucceſsful. Even our privateers and merchantmen ſeem to be emulating

lating in deeds of valour and exertion our ſhips of war, and to feel all the pride which attaches to the name of a Britiſh ſailor. Whilſt, however, I beſtow this praiſe, and feel this confidence, I muſt ſubmit to the conſideration of more competent judges, a point of ſome importance, and which appears to me to have been imprudently yielded to.

Thinking as I do, that the glory and power of this great country, and its proſperity in every ſhape, are ſo intimately blended with the decided ſuperiority of our marine, I am clearly of opinion, that we cannot be too jealous of teaching other maritime ſtates to rival us in this reſpect. Our unconteſted pre-eminence has ariſen out of a long ſeries of practical regulations, which have taken advantage of the inſtinctive propenſities of the people. Our inſular ſituation, and our vaſt colonial poſſeſſions in remote quarters of the globe, have naturally created a predilection for nautical and commercial concerns; and the experience, which has been thus acquired, has been directed and improved by education. The duties which are performed in a Britiſh ſhip of war; the high ſtate of diſcipline and order which prevail; the punctuality, preciſion, and expertneſs, with which every thing is conducted; have given a peculiar character to Britiſh ſailors, and, combined with natural aptitude, have rendered them,

what

what they indiſputably are, ſuperior to any ſailors that ever exiſted.

On theſe principles I object moſt decidedly to that permiſſion which was granted, about eighteen months ago, of permitting Ruſſia to diſtribute three hundred boys, who had been ſelected and previouſly prepared by the government of that empire, in the quality of midſhipmen, on board the Britiſh fleets. Theſe boys have been admitted, in my opinion moſt injudiciouſly, to ſerve in our navy at the period of life at which our own midſhipmen uſually begin their career; and having been picked out of numbers on account of their ſuperior intelligence and ſprightlineſs, it is very evident that they are likely to derive every advantage from their apprenticeſhip, which could be hoped for from the ſame number of Britiſh boys ſo choſen. They muſt inevitably be familiariſed with the whole ground-work and ſyſtem of naval tactics as they are practiſed in the Britiſh navy. This ſcience and ſkill they will carry with them into their own country, where they will probably, in the courſe of years, fill important ſtations, and lay the foundation of a Ruſſian navy which, at ſome future period, may rival ours. The period when this may happen is no doubt remote; yet this is the ſureſt mode of leſſening that diſtance of time, and I think poſterity will

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owe little thanks to that foreſight or prudence which has ſo impolitically conceded, and which, carried to a greater extent, may be productive of very ſerious miſchief. Having however permitted them to enter, this is certainly not the moment to diſmiſs them; but I cannot help blaming that kind of remiſſneſs which could be induced to conſent to ſuch a propoſal, and I ſincerely hope that the number may, on no account, be augmented. There are alſo a few regulations which might, I think, be attended with beneficial effects, and which, as I am on the ſubject, I ſhall take the liberty of mentioning.

In every King's ſhip, at leaſt of, and above, the rate of a frigate, there ſhould certainly be a ſchoolmaſter to keep the youngſters a given portion of the day at ſtudy; to inſtruct them in the elements of navigation and aſtronomy; and to watch over their conduct and aſſiduity in every thing which concerns naval ſcience and diſcipline. This province, with an additional ſalary, might be allotted to the maſters, who are entitled to more encouragement than they receive. According to the preſent rules of the navy they are precluded from all chance of promotion, which not only operates as a ſtrong drawback on exertion, but excludes from this branch of the ſervice many of thoſe who are beſt qualified to diſcharge its duties. Hence it frequently

quently occurs, that theſe men who ſhould be, both practically and theoretically, perſons of the greateſt knowledge and experience, are very deficient in theſe qualifications; and, when an intricate caſe ariſes, they are puzzled how to act. If theſe obſtacles were removed, the ſalary augmented, and the fair chance of preferment held out, this very important poſt would, no doubt, be more ably filled.

The pay of the ſurgeons and ſurgeons' mates ſhould alſo be increaſed,* ſo as to induce men of eminent ſcientific reſearch, and great practical ſkill, to engage themſelves. Many of this deſcription there certainly are; but theſe, it muſt be owned, are not ſufficiently rewarded, and thoſe who are without theſe requiſites, the ſooner they are diſmiſſed the better. Men who gallantly expoſe their lives in the ſervice of the ſtate are entitled to every care and comfort which money can provide. The ſalary of this indiſpenſable appointment ſhould therefore be ample, and no one ſhould be ſuffered to obtain it without having received a regular education, and having undergone a ſtrict examination.

To theſe alterations another of great utility

* I understand that an order has been lately given to this effect.

might

might be added; which is, that each ſhip ſhould, at the expence of government, be furniſhed with every neceſſary nautical inſtrument, and a complete ſet of charts. This laſt deſideratum is an object of conſiderable importance, as, by the preſent regulations, every captain being obliged to purchaſe his own charts, a ſhip, in general, is only provided with thoſe which are neceſſary for the particular ſtation on which ſhe happens to be employed. Very few Engliſh charts are laid down with accuracy, ſo that he is obliged to have recourſe to foreign ones, which are purchaſed at a conſiderable expence, and which, although procured for the neceſſary ſervice of his country, if landed in England, are liable to a heavy duty. He, therefore, does with as few as he can. But ſhould any ſealed orders arrive (a caſe continually occurring) which are to be opened in a certain latitude, it is not unlikely that he ſhould be ſent unawares to a place which he never before viſited, and with which no one in the ſhip has the ſlighteſt acquaintance. He is thus reduced to the neceſſity of conſulting ſome general work, where coaſts, if they be noticed at all, are laid down with the greateſt ſlovenlineſs, by which he is expoſed to ſerious inconvenience and riſk. How much wiſer would it be, and how much more worthy of the grandeur of our naval eſta-

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bliſhment, if proper charts, according to regular and well-authenticated ſurveys, were collected and publiſhed, under the auſpices of government—according to our own ſurveys when they could be relied on, and according to thoſe of other countries when they were aſcertained to be more accurate. Of theſe every ſhip of war, liable to be ſent on diſtant expeditions, ſhould be provided with a complete ſet, for which the captain might be made reſponſible. In this office might be alſo treaſured up every kind of information, concerning ſurveys of coaſts and harbours, plans of fortifications, and various other ſubjects, of which thoſe that it was not deemed neceſſary to bind up with the general Atlas, might be always in readineſs, ſo as to be forwarded with the orders for any ſecret expedition: a plan which, if properly methodiſed, would be attended with very evident and material advantage.

There is another appointment which I muſt confeſs I ſhould rejoice to ſee take place, which is that of a chaplain to every ſhip of and above the rate of a frigate. Great as the levity and the diſſipation of the age are, it is univerſally acknowledged, that we are entirely dependent on the Supreme Being; and if prayers to the Deity be of importance on ſhore, they can be diveſted of none of that importance at ſea. It were, therefore, much to be wiſhed,

wiſhed, that divine ſervice were regularly and ſolemnly performed on board of ſhip every Sunday morning (unleſs prevented by urgent duty) by an ordained prieſt. Being entirely at the mercy of the great Author of Nature, both as individuals and a nation, it ſurely behoves us, in every point of view, whether as an example or an act of more immediate concern, to habituate ourſelves to expreſs our gratitude for thoſe ſignal favours which in his bounty he has conferred, and to implore, with fervour and humility, his continued protection. The additional expence of theſe various arrangements would be trifling; they would make a proviſion for many worthy and uſeful members of ſociety; and the country might be expected to reap from them very eſſential benefits.

Reſpecting the diſtribution and force of our ſhips I ſhall alſo beg leave to make a few remarks.

The ſyſtem of blockading our enemy's ports, although it have been ſo pertinaciouſly perſiſted in, does not ſeem to meet with the approbation of the moſt intelligent naval officers. Nor, indeed, has it been attended with any advantage, at all anſwerable to the exorbitant expence which it occaſions, and to the more deſtructive wear and tear, and frequent accidents which are in-

curred. But it ſeems to be, in ſome meaſure, the deſtiny of official orders to act in extremes, and, as a puniſhment for Lord Bridport's inactivity, Admiral Cornwallis is kept continually at ſea. Now it muſt ſtrike every reaſonable man, that a medium between theſe two oppoſite modes is the ſafeſt and the beſt. If it were meant as an experiment to ſhew the French what Britiſh ſailors could do, and to prove to them, that in deſpight of the elements, we could confine them to their ports throughout the year, that experiment has been fully made, and that proof fully given. But when we find that we are expoſed to perpetual hazards, and to gales of wind, which, from the ſkill and experience of our ſailors, we ride out, but which no ſkill or experience can prevent from doing very ſerious damage, and that no particular object is gained by it, I cannot diſcover on what principles of wiſdom it ſhould be perſevered in. Would it not be much more judicious, to keep a few frigates and lighter veſſels cruizing off Breſt, and the other principal French harbours, as a ſquadron of obſervation, whilſt our Channel fleet was lying at anchor at ſome convenient place of rendezvous? not, however, inactive; but, as the weather and ſeaſon favoured them, putting to ſea, and occaſionally ſhewing themſelves before the enemy's ports. Every good purpoſe during the tem-

tempeſtuous months of the year might be thus anſwered, and thoſe ſerious accidents which are ſo often crippling our fineſt ſhips might be in a great meaſure avoided. Thoſe fruitleſs attacks on the Boulogne flotilla it would ſurely alſo be much wiſer totally to abandon. It has been fully proved, that it is not in our power to do it any effectual miſchief, as long as it continues in harbour, or lies under the protection of the land batteries. Why then expoſe our men by attempting what it is beyond the faculties of men to ſucceed in? On theſe occaſions we generally loſe thoſe who are moſt valuable to the ſervice.

Numerous as our ſhips of war are, there is one deſcription of veſſels in which we are deficient, and which yet might be frequently moſt advantageouſly employed. I mean gun boats. On our own coaſt they would be very convenient, whether as weapons of defence or attack, and, at many of our military poſts, particularly at Gibraltar, they might be moſt uſefully diſpoſed of. In calm weather, by coming to cloſe quarters, and getting below the bearing of heavy guns, they may be a dreadful annoyance to large ſhips. This was ſeveral times experienced during the laſt war, particularly in the gallant action fought by Sir James Saumarez in Algeſiras bay; on which occaſion, had we alſo poſſeſſed gun boats, a great part of the miſchief

miſchief which happened might have been eaſily prevented. In attacking privateers in ports, and cutting out merchantmen, theſe veſſels are alſo always found handy and ſerviceable.

Our army is every day getting on a more reſpectable footing, and that military weakneſs which was occaſioned, immediately after the late peace, by a too precipitate diſmiſſal of many of our beſt troops, is rapidly diſappearing. The regular army and the militia have, within the laſt ſix months, been conſiderably ſtrengthened, and the numerous volunteer and fencible regiments have made great progreſs in expertneſs and diſcipline.* Some of the moſt palpable objections to the original mode of raiſing men have been removed, and thoſe obvious ones which ſtill remain will, no doubt, undergo a reviſion. The laſt bill has, however, I underſtand, fallen very ſhort of its object, and to create at once a regular efficient force, it will probably be deemed neceſſary to reduce the militia, and, by a ſmall bounty, endea-

* It appears that the regular force of this empire, including guards and garrisons, amounts to 143,980; the embodied militia and fencible infantry to 103,328; the foreign corps to 17,386; the forces in India to 20,145; and in our plantations to 46,952, and our volunteers to 325,000 effective men, 240,000 of whom have been inſpected and reported fit for ſervice; making altogether a military force of 656,791 men. Our ſailors and marines amount to 120,000 more.

vour to induce the ſupernumeraries to enter into the regiments of the line. Limited periods of ſervice would alſo, I am convinced, be a powerful incentive to enliſt; and this engagement might be ſo arranged, that few men, worth preſerving, would be loſt to the ſtate. If, for example, a certain bounty were offered ſufficient to diſpoſe a man to enter for the term of ſeven or ten years, at the expiration of two, thoſe men whoſe engagement you might wiſh to prolong beyond the ſpecified period, might be, in general, perſuaded for a trifling conſideration, to extend it to the original term. By this mode a vaſt ſum of money would be ſaved to the ſtate; the ſoldiers would be more attached to the ſervice; and the army would conſiſt of none but effective men. A few eſtabliſhments, ſimilar to that at Chelſea, by which boys, if ſo diſpoſed, are brought up to the military profeſſion, would enable the government, in ſome degree, to draw from a fund without impoveriſhing the population; and would afford an aſylum to many who are bred up to a life of infamy, and who, inſtead of committing depredations on the public, would be contributing to its protection and ſupport.

From the above ſtatements it appears, that the ſituation of this country is, on the whole, highly proſperous, and that its proſperity is not derived from any factitious ſources, but from ſolid, inherent,

rent, and permanent cauſes. Commerce, which conduces more than any other purſuit to the wealth, the happineſs, and induſtry, of a people, has only been made ſubordinate to our naval greatneſs, by which the ſtrength, neceſſary for the preſervation of thoſe advantages, is provided.* Intereſt is rendered ſubſervient to independence, wealth to glory. This ſeems to be the line of policy which is beſt calculated to perpetuate the grandeur of this country, and it is likely to be adhered to, as it ſprings out of our national genius and character. The ſuperiority of the Carthaginians as a commercial people, enabled them to contend ſo long againſt the Romans; the ſuperiority of the Greeks as a naval people, enabled them to triumph over the Perſians. In Great Britain both theſe advantages are moſt happily blended. The martial talents of its inhabitants have not been impaired by their commercial ſucceſs. If the queſtion were

* Our navigation act, which has been, at different times, so bitterly inveighed against, however it may have laid the foundation of our naval greatness, was not instrumental in extending our commerce, on which it even operated as a restraint. Nor did any of the commercial states of Europe suffer from it except the Dutch, who were, at that time, in possession of almost the whole of the carrying trade, which to them was a very lucrative branch. Being however a law entirely of internal regulation, in whichever way it may have operated, no one has a right to complain.

which

which ſhould periſh, valour would reign decidedly paramount. But they have been made inſtrumental to each other. What the one acquires, the other protects; what this defends, that rewards. It is the path of induſtry leading to the temple of glory: it is bravery ſecuring the advantages which riches provide.

But I have always, under the moſt trying circumſtances of this country (and ample of late years have they been) repoſed an unbounded confidence in its energies, in its reſources, and, above all, in its patriotiſm. A people who have ſuch objects to contend for as are entruſted to our charge, and who alſo know how to appreciate them, are not to be ſubdued. I have, therefore, always treated the idea of invaſion, that is to ſay, of its ultimate conſequences, as I treat it now, with ſovereign contempt. I have always been firmly perſuaded, that Bonaparte, notwithſtanding all his boiſterous declarations, will not perſonally hazard the attempt. The ſpirit of the country firſt deterred him; its preparations muſt confirm that caution. He has alſo himſelf tried the temper of our ſwords, and has diſcovered that they are ſuperior to thoſe either of Toledo or Damaſcus.

With all this ſecurity I ſhould not, however, counſel an expedition which would require the long abſence of any large body of troops as a ſuc-

cour to a foreign ſtate. On theſe grounds I ſhould ſtrongly object againſt a military expedition againſt the Spaniſh poſſeſſions in America; and, although it be poſitively inſiſted on by many, that a conſiderable army is immediately to be embarked for the defence of Portugal, I perceive ſo many powerful reaſons for heſitation, that I cannot bring myſelf to think, that ſuch a meaſure will be adopted, or, if adopted, that it will be wiſe, and for the following reaſons:

In the firſt place, a deduction of 20 or 30,000 men from our regular army (and we could hardly think of ſending leſs) would very materially weaken the national force; and, although the country might be ſtill, as I believe it would be, ſafe from invaſion, the inconveniences attending ſuch a ſudden diminution would, I fear, much more than counterbalance any benefits which we could rationally expect to derive. If, indeed, we were morally certain, that the Portugueſe, being driven to a ſtate of abſolute deſpair, were reſolutely bent on employing every means in defence of their national independence: if we were certain that Pruſſia, with 20 or 30,000 men, would, at the ſame time, make a deſcent on Holland; that Ruſſia and Sweden would pour a powerful army into Hanover and Brabant; and that Auſtria would invade Italy and Switzerland: we might then, amidſt

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the diſtractions which theſe numerous attacks would occaſion to France, with certain effect, contribute our aid to Portugal. But whilſt all or moſt of theſe points remain problematical, I cannot perceive a probability of ſucceſs.* Let us not, therefore, run the riſk of embarraſſment, expence, diſcomfiture, and diſgrace, till we have ſome brighter proſpect, and are perfectly ſure of the grounds on which we proceed. We had, in the courſe of the laſt war, ſome ſevere leſſons on this ſcore, when, for want of previous intelligence, well connected diſpoſitions, and expected co-operation, we were expoſed to misfortunes of a very ſerious caſt.

Britiſh troops, led on by Britiſh officers, in a truly Britiſh cauſe, againſt an equal number of any other troops, we have abundance of reaſon to think will acquit themſelves with honour. This point never was more glorioufly exemplified than in the Egyptian campaign, when a more numerous army of picked ſoldiers, in poſſeſſion of the country, and inured to the climate, was, in the courſe of a few months, obliged to ſurrender to the ſupe-

* What happened in 1762, cannot be quoted as a ground of expectation for a similar success now. The power and spirit of France were then very different. She was engaged in great continental difficulties, and she had, for many previous years, been involved in one of the most unsuccessful wars which she ever waged.

rior valour and ſkill of the Britiſh troops. But, when their numbers are ſmall compared with their allies or their enemies, which muſt ever be the caſe in continental expeditions, the Britiſh, who then only act as auxiliaries, cannot be made reſponſible for the conduct or the ſucceſs of the main army. If the Portugueſe be firmly reſolved on their defence, and actuated by a due ſenſe of honour and fame, by patriotiſm and public ſpirit as well as by a feeling of intereſt, they will not be readily ſubjugated. Let them recollect, that towards the end of the fifteenth century, they were one of the moſt powerful and proſperous nations of Europe; that the boldneſs and enterpriſe of their navigators firſt pointed out the track to a new world, and ſecured to themſelves a new empire; that, if Philip II. ſubdued them in 1581, in 1640 they again threw off the Spaniſh yoke; and that, after a ſtruggle of eight-and-twenty years againſt the whole ſtrength of the Spaniſh monarchy, they firmly eſtabliſhed the family of Braganza on their throne. The advantages of their diſcoveries have been loſt from a defect in their national character, and their military virtues have long been declining from the vices of their government. The materials of an army are, however, ſtill in the country. The people are robuſt, patient, ſober, active, and brave, and under proper regulations in the appointment

and

and ſelection of officers, their diſcipline, which is at preſent totally relaxed, might be reſtored. When therefore the Portugueſe ſhall have made the neceſſary preparations and exertions for their own defence; when they ſhall have afforded undoubted proofs of vigour and zeal in their own cauſe; they may then be entitled to aſſiſtance from us. But to ſend to Portugal a Britiſh army on the mere ſuppoſition that ſhe will ſtand forth a glorious exception to the tame ſubmiſſion of other parts of the continent, would be a dangerous experiment, and would be placing a confidence in her inhabitants which, hitherto, has not been warranted by facts.

The ſtate of parties, even in this country, is not ſuch as one ſhould expect, at a moment which ſo eminently chailenges the action of every diſintereſted virtue, and all the unanimity and vigour which the diſtinguiſhed talents of its leading men might with ſuch effect afford. The dilemma to which many of them are at this moment reduced, is a ſubject on which we cannot dwell with any feeling of ſatisfaction, much leſs of exultation. Love of power, and love of place, mingled with diſappointed ambition, have lately, in numerous inſtances, moſt conſpicuouſly triumphed over all conſiſtency of conduct, all principle of patriotiſm, and, I fear, I may add, all ſenſe of duty.

Every

Every member of the community is intereſted in the character of thoſe men who take the lead in public affairs. He feels himſelf, in ſome meaſure, degraded by their dereliction, as it attaints the opinion which he had formed of the public virtue of his country. He, therefore, is intimately concerned in the formation of political parties; and when great revolutions occur, he, for the honour of the community of which he is a part, is anxious to reconcile them to the principles of juſtice and reaſon. His efforts, in this inſtance, as they have unhappily been in innumerable ones before, are completely ineffectual, for on none of theſe grounds can we account for late occurrences. How men of ſuch adverſe principles and declared views, which have been adhered to with every feeling of animoſity for a long courſe of years, as have diſtinguiſhed the old and the new oppoſition; men who, through the beſt part of their lives, have been oppoſing each other with all the zeal, and much of the intemperate virulence, of party rage; who, on ſome occaſions, have accuſed each other of the moſt unconſtitutional intentions, and the moſt factious practices; whoſe doctrines have been as eſſentially at variance as doctrines can be, both in foundation and ſuperſtructure, both in origin and deduction, both in argument and practice; who have been diametrically oppoſite

ſite in all important opinions, whether of foreign or domeſtic policy; who have in no one maxim agreed, in no one ſentiment accorded, in no one ſhade of argument approximated; who have, in every point of contact, been fundamentally and invariably at iſſue; ſhould, in one moment, have removed this immenſurable diſtance, in one moment have levelled theſe ſeemingly irreconcileable and inſuperable obſtructions, and, diſmiſſing even the recollection of all paſt differences, ſhould at once have drawn together in one friendly knot; is an event which baffles every attempt at explanation. Nor are their previouſly violent political diſagreements, in any ſhape, the reſult of ſuppoſition; nor can they be attributed to the various lights in which the agitation of political queſtions is frequently to be viewed. They are inherent, eſſential, radical; founded on the very baſis of the human heart and mind. We can neither miſtake nor forget them. They are all, unhappily for the parties, on record, noted down in letters which no pen can eraſe, which no time can obliterate. They are enregiſtered among the reports of the parliamentary debates, which are deſtined to furniſh materials to the future hiſtorian, and on which he will, no doubt, deſcant with many a bluſh and ſigh.

The political life of Mr. Fox (which, with all its errors, from an admiration of his wonderful talents,

talents, one is inclined to inveſtigate with tenderneſs) has certainly furniſhed a ſtrong precedent for ſuch an union; but that ſuch men as Lord Spencer, Lord Grenville, Mr. Windham, and a few others, ſhould have ventured to imitate him in that act, which, to uſe the mildeſt language, has caſt a ſhade over his political fame, is a ſubject of general aſtoniſhment and regret. In ſaying this, I am not an enemy, by any means, to a firm, patriotic, conſtitutional oppoſition: ſo far from it, that I always rejoice when there is an enlightened and reſpectable ſet of men, who, from honourable public principles, watch over the meaſures, examine the motives, and controul the influence of adminiſtration; warn them of their follies, detect their errors, and call them to a ſevere account for a wanton miſapplication of their powers. This is what every one, who properly comprehends, and ſincerely loves, the ſpirit of the Britiſh conſtitution, muſt ever moſt ardently deſire. But an oppoſition actuated and governed by theſe laudable, ſafe, and conſiſtent views, will be as diſtant from faction and caprice as from tame or corrupt compliance; will reſiſt bad meaſures, not bad and good equally; will oppoſe meaſures which have a vitious, a ruinous, or an arbitrary tendency, from whatever ſet of men they may proceed, and not oppoſe any and every meaſure, merely

merely becauſe it is introduced by his Majeſty's miniſters.

When a negociation was going forward ſome months ago, to bring in an adminiſtration on general principles, in which it was purpoſed to include men of all parties moſt conſpicuous for their abilities, deſirable as ſuch an object would have been, could any ſincere co-operation have been expected, it is not difficult to imagine which party would have been deſtined to yield. If Mr. Fox had formed part of an adminiſtration with Mr. Pitt, it is very evident that the former gentleman muſt, in ſome meaſure, have ſurrendered his public principles and opinions to the latter.*

And

* Lord Grenville in a late debate said, Why reproach me with forming a connexion with Mr. Fox, when Mr. Pitt himself, not long since, recommended that gentleman to his Majesty to fill one of the most important offices of the state? Whether Mr. Pitt followed his own judgment and inclination, or the apparent wishes of the country, on this occasion, I shall not attempt to determine: however, an insuperable objection came from a higher quarter. If this connexion had, however, taken place, as far as Mr. Pitt was concerned, the dissimilitude would have been very striking from that which Lord Grenville has thought proper to form. Mr. Fox, as I have observed, coalescing with Mr. Pitt, must have yielded to Mr. Pitt's principles; whereas Lord Grenville, by coalescing with Mr. Fox, has yielded to Mr. Fox's principles, from which he,

And for this plain reaſon: becauſe the government of the country could not have been conducted on oppoſition principles, much leſs on thoſe principles which have, at various times, been ſanctioned and profeſſed by Mr. Fox. Many of this juſtly celebrated orator's moſt remarkable ſentiments and declarations muſt have been virtually revoked and abjured, before he could have been admitted into his Majeſty's councils; and, had he been reinſtated there, he, no doubt, would have ſtriven to atone for them, by rendering thoſe ſervices to his country which his ſplendid talents are ſo well fitted to confer. If, therefore, the government could have been ſmoothly carried on; if union, or any thing like union, in the cabinet, could have been hoped for; if party hatred and animoſity could have been buried in oblivion; if the recollection of paſt bitterneſs could have been expunged; and all theſe tranſcendent minds could have been ſincerely united for the advantage of the commonwealth; it would have been an event of cordial congratulation with every one who is attached to the welfare of his country. But how ſo many obſtinate difficulties could have been ſur-

he, through a long course of years, completely dissented, and was in the habit of representing in a most questionable shape.

mounted;

mounted; how ſo many elementary and recurring cauſes of mutual reproach and aggravation could have been ſilenced; how ſo many ſeeds of diſunion and irritation could have been eradicated; it is beyond the verge of imagination to conceive.

This negociation having failed, and the adminiſtration of the country having been conſtituted on a leſs comprehenſive, but a more congruous, baſis, all the feelings of the old oppoſition are revived, and, ſtrengthened as they are by new proſelytes, we may expect that their operations will be carried on with increaſed exertion and bitterneſs. The Spaniſh war will, no doubt, form a point of attack;* but as, on this ſubject, they may expect ſome of their leſs violent ſupporters to deſert their ſtandards, another has been more peculiarly ſelected as the criterion of their ſtrength. On this queſtion they ſeem determined to muſter all their forces, and to make their chief ſtand. And it is certainly well ſelected for the purpoſe, as it is calculated, above all others, to occaſion warmth and diſſenſion, and to embarraſs his Majeſty's miniſters. This queſtion, which is ſo intereſting to the internal government of the

* On the diſcuſſion of this queſtion, the diviſion in the Lords was 36 againſt 114, in the Commons 106 againſt 313.

united kingdom, and which, it is underſtood, will certainly be brought forward for the conſideration of Parliament during the preſent ſeſſion, is the emancipation of the Iriſh Roman Catholics. It is, however, a ſubject which, in my opinion, thoſe who think ſoundly would, in theſe critical times, wiſh to wave, as there is none on which men entertain more oppoſite ſentiments, or which is likely to create, particularly in Ireland, greater animoſities and heats.

If the juſtice of the cauſe were merely the conſideration; if it ſimply were aſked, ſhould not the majority of a kingdom, profeſſing any particular faith, not only be protected in their mode of worſhip, but granted every privilege and immunity which appertain to others; few would be inclined to anſwer in the negative. But this is far from being an inſulated queſtion. In it are neceſſarily involved moſt grave and cogent relative conſiderations, which are pre-eminently adapted to excite heſitation and doubt.

Juſtice is of two kinds, ſimple and mixed. In the firſt inſtance, as it ſtands alone and unconnected; in the ſecond, as it endangers, or trenches upon, the hitherto acknowledged rights of others. As it regards the firſt point, it might be a very wiſe act of the legiſlature to grant the requeſt immediately on application: as it regards the ſecond,

it

it becomes a caſe of moſt momentous and delicate deliberation; and, according to circumſtances, may be the precurſor of moſt beneficial or moſt diſaſtrous conſequences. Juſtice, which improves the condition of one ſet of men without deteriorating that of another, every liberal mind, the moment the appeal is made, muſt at once accede to. But mixed juſtice, which profeſſes not that innoxious nature, and which, by being haſtily liſtened to, may ſeriouſly infringe the privileges and enjoyments of others, and through them may lead to the public at large, cannot be inveſtigated with too much minuteneſs.

The poſſeſſion of freedom, and the abolition of all thoſe abuſes and reſtraints which are inconſiſtent with the rational exerciſe of it, ſeem to be an inherent right of our nature. Yet even this chief inſtrument of the happineſs of ſocial life muſt not be precipitantly or indiſcriminately granted: becauſe, if it were, it would defeat its own end, and, inſtead of commanding the object in view, would only lead to miſery and perplexity of every deſcription. All improvement muſt be gradual. People muſt paſs through the hardſhips of ſavage life before they reach the benefits of poliſhed ſociety. Before any great change be introduced among them, they muſt be properly prepared for its reception; otherwiſe, whatever may be its intrinſic

trinſic worth, the hopes of all parties will be grievouſly diſappointed. If, for example, the privileges of the Britiſh conſtitution were, from a beneficent motive, beſtowed on the Ruſſian, the Hungarian, or Poliſh peaſants, who, time out of mind, have been groaning under the terrors and the laſh of vaſſalage; although the benefit, eſſentially, would be the greateſt that could be conferred, yet can the moſt romantic ſpeculatiſt conceive, as it affected the lot of theſe oppreſſed people, that their happineſs would be in the ſmalleſt degree advanced? Exonerated at once, and without preparation, from their ſubmiſſive ſtate, the uſe which they would inſtantly make of their freedom would be to ſpread deſolation through their country. To burn and deſtroy, to ſeize property, to ranſack churches, to degrade and murder their former maſters, ſuch would be the ſavage occupations of theſe enfranchiſed zealots; till at laſt ſome daring leader, bolder or more fortunate than the reſt, would repreſs their violences by binding down their paſſions with their original chains. Such would be the certain effects of ſuch privileges granted under ſuch circumſtances. Indiſcriminate maſſacre, and pillage, and violation, would reign till things were brought back to their former ſtate. Yet no one will for a moment deny, that the Britiſh conſtitution poſ-

ſeſſes

feſſes innumerable advantages over a barbarous feudality by which our moſt natural feelings are inſulted, and our moſt obvious rights infringed. But the fact is, men muſt be enlightened before they can be free, otherwiſe thoſe very paſſions and virtues which, when properly diſciplined, are employed in their preſervation, blaze out in an oppoſite courſe, and precipitate their deſtruction. We cannot have a more convincing or tragical expoſition in teſtimony of the ſoundneſs of this propoſition, than what has been afforded by the French revolution, which, after the entire range of every crime committed in every exceſs, has terminated in the triumph of a more condenſed tyranny.

I have deemed it neceſſary to ſay thus much as an introduction to my view of a moſt important queſtion; a queſtion, the agitation of which, however an object of fervent deſire with ſome, is ſincerely deprecated, in the preſent critical ſtate of that divided country, by many of its wiſeſt and moſt enlightened politicians. Nor ſhould the Iriſh themſelves, I mean thoſe of them who are moſt immediately concerned, preſs it at preſent, conſidering the liberality with which they have already been treated.

Since the commencement of his preſent Majeſty's reign, immunities have been granted to his Catholic

Catholic ſubjects in Ireland, which were certainly never dreamt of previously to his acceſſion. But one ſtep has pointed out the propriety of another; and it has only been the readineſs with which their complaints have been liſtened to, and the facility with which their deſires have been complied with, which have conducted them to this ultimate demand. The firſt redreſs which was petitioned for was the toleration of their religion.* This was hardly expected, but, being obtained, a farther wiſh was expreſſed, which, being alſo accompliſhed, created a freſh deſire, and ſo they went on, increaſing in their demands as their demands were ſatisfied, till they have left but one reſtraint unrepealed. This reſtraint, which, if reſcinded, they aver would be the completion of their wiſhes, is a very trifling one compared with many which have been before annulled, as it only excludes from a ſeat in Parliament, the higheſt ranks in the army and navy, and about eighteen or twenty confidential offices of ſtate. Other reſtrictions affected the whole

* The system of concession to the Roman Catholics began about the year 1773. Previously to that period, they laboured under disabilities which placed them in a complete state of vassalage. It is, however, much to be regretted that their turbulence has by no means been mitigated by the favours conferred on them by the legislature.

community;

community, but this, in its moſt enlarged operation, cannot be ſuppoſed to benefit above fifty or ſixty individuals out of the aggregate of the Roman Catholics in Ireland. In one ſenſe, indeed, I am aware that it may be ſaid to concern the whole body; as, if this limitation were removed, all might aſpire to the ſituations which would be thus thrown open to the ambition of all. Still this is ſtraining it to a latitude and interpretation of which it will not fairly admit.

The Roman Catholics allege, by way of ſhewing the extent of this grievance, that they contribute to the taxes equally with his Majeſty's other ſubjects, without being conſulted in the impoſition of them. But how many thouſands and hundreds of thouſands of his majeſty's ſubjects, in all parts of his empire, many of them too men of conſiderable property and great ſtake in the country, are placed in the ſame predicament? If thoſe who have no voice were not as well and as efficiently repreſented as thoſe who have; if the protection of the laws were only extended to thoſe who aſſiſted in their enaction; or if they were adminiſtered with partiality towards any particular deſcription of people; here would be moſt ſerious cauſe of complaint. But the Roman Catholics muſt know and feel, that conſtituted as the Parliament is, they poſſeſs in every reſpect the full

privileges of Britiſh ſubjects in common with others, with the exception of one, which has been withheld on grounds very intimately connected with the ſafety of the country. But conſidering the extreme caution of former reigns, a caution warranted by very ſound reaſons of ſtate; conſidering the diſtance and reſerve with which the Roman Catholics of Ireland were uniformly regarded by his Majeſty's predeceſſors; it muſt be allowed that they have received innumerable bleſſings from the preſent king.* The diſpoſition to comply with their wiſhes, to redreſs their grievances, and to reſtore them to a proper degree of political conſideration in the ſtate, has been moſt liberally demonſtrated; and if the *laſt* and, as they *ſay*, the *only* prayer which they have now to

* The Roman Catholics in Ireland enjoy the full and free exercise of their religion, and colleges have even been founded by the state for the education of their clergy; they are eligible to offices, the emoluments of which do not exceed 300l. a year; they can bear commissions in the army as high as the rank of colonel; they can practise at the bar, and sit as magistrates; and they are in full possession of the elective franchise. All these concessions have been granted by his present majesty. They are thus already in possession of every civil right: they are only excluded from political power; and if we consult the authority of history, it certainly exhibits very powerful reasons against blending people of all religious persuasions in the government of a country.

prefer,

prefer, ſhould be rejected, they are bound, from a ſenſe of former conceſſions, to bear the diſappointment with patience and moderation.

The diſabilities under which they long laboured were conſidered, at the time at which they were enforced, as eſſentially neceſſary to the preſervation of the government, and of the eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment of the empire; and although, as men have become more enlightened, and the church and ſtate have felt themſelves more ſecure, many of theſe impediments have been removed, yet ſome may ſtill, even with the leaſt prejudiced, be ſuppoſed to exiſt. It is, therefore, no more than prudence requires, to deliberate moſt maturely on theſe points before they are finally repealed.*

The grand objection againſt the wiſdom of this meaſure is the difficulty of reconciling the tenets of the Church of Rome with the ſafety of the Church of England, or, indeed, of the Britiſh conſtitution. The doctrines of that church ſtrike at the root of many of thoſe maxims which we have been accuſtomed to hold ſacred, and are completely ſubverſive of that mild ſyſtem of forbear-

* We must ever bear in mind, that the despotism of the French and Spanish monarchies was, in great measure, established on the ruin of the protestant cause in those countries; and that the freedom of our own constitution was, in great measure, derived from its success.

ance and toleration for which the government and prevailing religion of this country are ſo eminently remarkable. The ſpirit of proſelytiſm among the Roman Catholics is already ſufficiently active, without arming it with any additional means; and, if not ſo ſucceſsful as formerly, that diminution is not to be attributed to any relaxation of their zeal, but to the additional knowledge (that moſt powerful enemy to bigotry) which has been diſtributed through all ranks and claſſes of the population of moſt parts of the Britiſh empire. Theſe improvements in education have, however, by all accounts, by no means kept pace among the Iriſh peaſants, who, in many provinces, are repreſented to be ſtill immerſed in the groſſeſt ignorance.

The northern parts of Ireland are the moſt orderly, the moſt enlightened, the moſt induſtrious, and, conſequently, the moſt proſperous and happy. But here the people are chiefly proteſtants; which proves the ſuperior influence of a mild and liberal religion, over one which is calculated to repreſs the career of improvement, to engender lazineſs and vice, and to imbrute the very underſtanding of man. The ſame diſtinction may be obſerved to prevail in every other part of Europe where proteſtants are placed in competition with catholics. The tenets of the former encourage,

encourage, thoſe of the latter confine, the energies of our beſt faculties. A ſtate of ignorance is, indeed, moſt conſonant with the views of the Romiſh church, becauſe that ſtate is beſt ſuited for the reception of thoſe ſuperſtitious and erroneous doctrines which lay the foundation of that blind attachment for which its members are ſo conſpicuous.

Theſe fatal obſtructions to all induſtry, activity, or improvement, might, no doubt, by wiſe and wholeſome regulations, be materially diminiſhed. The eſtabliſhment of ſchools in different parts of Ireland, ſimilar to thoſe founded in Scotland, would powerfully conduce to the removal of many of thoſe prepoſterous prejudices on which the Roman Catholic faith is reared. This, I think, ſhould be done as a preparatory ſtep to complete emancipation. We ſhould alſo endeavour to weaken the influence of the prieſthood over the lower claſſes; an inſtrument which is ſo often made uſe of as an engine of oppreſſion, and which, by acting on the imagination, is frequently exerciſed in a manner which is highly detrimental to morals, induſtry, and happineſs. This might be effected by making a national proviſion for thoſe who are really neceſſary for the diſcharge of the duties of the Roman Catholic church. By thus granting ſtipends to the officiating members, you would,

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in a great degree, break up the ruinous connexion which at preſent ſubſiſts between the prieſts and their followers. By rendering them dependent on the government, you would in the ſame proportion attach them to it; and what is alſo of the greateſt importance, you would have an opportunity of ſelecting the moſt enlightened and the moſt worthy, and of courſe, of putting a ſtop to many of thoſe baneful doctrines which are at preſent inculcated with ſuch deleterious ſucceſs.*

After all, however, one great difficulty would remain to obſtruct the accompliſhment of this final act.

According to the conſtitutional law of this empire the king is placed, and for very wiſe purpoſes, at the head of the church and ſtate. He is the fountain from which all honour, and one of the fountains from which all power, flow.† But the acknowledged head of the Roman Catholic faith is the Pope; a perſon from whom we have been

* The terrors of excommunication are exercised by many of these priests over the superstitious multitude with most powerful effect. Many of the higher classes, indeed, are not exempt from those foolish fears. We must recollect that it was the influence of a priest, operating on the bigotry of James II. which induced that monarch to break his coronation oath, by which he lost his crown.

† It was this union of spiritual and civil power which put an end to those dangerous disputes which were perpetually arising respecting the limits of these separate jurisdictions.

for

for near three centuries, completely ſeparated, and whom, from a recollection of paſt occurrences, we ſtill regard with enmity and dread. Yet the Roman Catholics moſt ſtedfaſtly and profeſſedly look up to him as the chief whom they are bound to ſupport; who can alone confer ſpiritual dignity or preferment; and alone legalize their eccleſiaſtical proceedings. In church affairs he holds paramount juriſdiction; he is ſtill conſulted in all clerical concerns, and all their titular biſhops are ſtill nominated by him. But how ſuch a power, or ſuch an interference, can be ſubſcribed to by the ſovereign and parliament of theſe realms, is difficult to imagine. It may, indeed, be ſaid, that the emancipation of the Roman Catholics might be conditional, and that this interference and acknowledged ſupremacy of the Pope might be renounced.* This might certainly, in ſome meaſure, remove the ſtumbling-block. But will they be ſatisfied

* It is said, that the parts of the consecration oath of the catholic bishops which are most offensive to the protestant church have, on a representation to the pope, been *by his order* expunged; and that a fresh clause has been introduced, respecting allegiance to the crown such as was approved of by the late empress of Russia for the catholic prelates of her empire. It is, however, difficult to comprehend the validity of this declaration; when they, at the same time, contend, that the infallibility of their general councils must for ever render their principles immutable.

with

with ſuch a limitation? Will they, I mean, not only *apparently* but *really* be ſatisfied? This point ſhould be previouſly fully explained and underſtood, ſo as to put all future diſcuſſion of the queſtion for ever at reſt.

In our intercourſe with theſe active and aſpiring agents, we cannot proceed with too much caution. We muſt recollect that one of the principles of their creed is to miſlead; and that a deception practiſed for the advancement of their church, or the diſſemination of their religion, loſes in their eyes all its moral guilt. In ſhort, for any crime an abſolution is an atonement, and a plenary indulgence from the Pope can at once whitewaſh the whole ſect.*

* What are we to think of the pretensions of the Romish church, when, even in an enlightened age, we find Leo X. openly carrying on a spiritual traffic, to the total dissolution of virtue, religion, and morals? This artful pontiff, who well knew how to take advantage of the stupidity and superstition of mankind, published a general sale of indulgences which were to operate as a complete remission of sins, and to restore to the primitive purity of baptism. Stated prices were fixed for particular crimes. The popes still claim this dispensing power; and although no liberal or honest man would avail himself of it, yet there are many wicked, artful, and designing people, still left to practise on the credulity of an ignorant peasantry, who may turn it, as indeed they have, to the worst of purposes.

Now

Now ſuppoſing all this to proſper, even in a political point of view, the Pope being their paſtoral leader, and the director and guide of their conſcience, and, at the ſame time, a mere creature and inſtrument in the hands of Bonaparte, one can eaſily imagine a good deal of embarraſſment and miſchief ariſing out of the ſubject.* The nature of the limitations muſt be therefore preciſely defined, and the conditions on which emancipation ſhould be conſented to moſt unequivocally ſtated, otherwiſe it may only be an introduction to freſh claims and pretenſions, till, at laſt, the very act of ſettlement itſelf is aſſailed.

Notwithſtanding all that I have ſaid, I am ſtill a friend to emancipation, but cautiouſly and ſeaſonably conceded. Before the Iriſh rebellion, I rather wiſhed it to take place. The horrible events of thoſe diſgraceful times, if they have not deſtroyed my opinion as to the policy of granting it *at all*, have very much ſtaggered it as to the policy of granting it *now*. A meaſure of this nature, when once acceded to, cannot be recalled. Although no political incapacity ſhould be continued longer than the neceſſity of the caſe requires, we are for that very reaſon, before we repeal it, bound to

* The order of Jeſuits, which was finally ſuppreſſed by Ganganelli, has been lately reſtored by the preſent Pope at the deſire of Bonaparte, with what views it is eaſy to guess.

aſcertain whether the neceſſity no longer exiſt. No reform ſhould be matter of mere metaphyſical conjecture: we ſhould, beforehand, be morally certain of its good effects. The catholics, in many inſtances, on that melancholy occaſion, committed the moſt deſperate outrages, and proved that the extermination of the proteſtants was not altogether abſent from their thoughts.* There is alſo a powerful party among them, denominated the ſeparatiſts, who are diſpoſed to go any lengths. Theſe ſentiments, I am fully convinced, are far from being eſpouſed by men of ſenſe, character, or weight, ſtill they have been expreſſed by a ſet of miſled miſcreants of that perſuaſion, and ought not only to induce caution, but to retard the fulfilment of their views. That rebellion, with all the barbarous enormities with which it was accompanied, has certainly diſpoſed me to conſider the meaſure in a very different light, and, warmly as I might have advocated it before, I am now decidedly of opinion, that the time is not yet come at which it might be granted without riſk. The ſituation of Ireland, notwithſtanding what has been advanced to the contrary, is ſtill very critical.

* The massacre of the protestants in the barn of Scullabogue so late as the year 1798 is one of the greatest stains that disfigures the history of any country.

Much

Much miſchief is ſtill carrying on.* The miners are at work, and we muſt guard againſt the explo-ſion. Times and circumſtances muſt be weighed. Let the deluded Iriſh firſt return to their duty; let them firſt prove that they are good and loyal ſub-jects; let thoſe embers of ſedition and rebellion be firſt extinct; before they make the application; and let them have no room to ſuppoſe that what ſhould be beſtowed from indulgence is extorted from fear. The Iriſh emancipation alſo involves a queſtion of much importance in this country, as, on the emancipation of the Roman Catholics in Ireland, thoſe of England would certainly be entitled to participate in the benefit. The Teſt Acts muſt alſo be immediately repealed,† and peo-

* This is evidently the opinion of the government of this country, from their having deemed it necessary to continue the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland. In the debate which took place on that subject in the House of Commons on the 8th of February, it was curious to hear Mr. Windham arguing against the measure; he who, whilst in administration, was so violent on the opposite side.

† The Test Act, which passed in 1673, obliges all persons, holding any public office, to take the oath of supremacy and allegiance; to receive the sacrament according to the rites of the church of England; and to abjure all belief in the doctrine of transubstantiation. The second Test Act, which passed in 1678, declares popery idolatry, and excludes all members, who refuse to take it, from both houses of parliament. When it was sent up to the Lords, the Duke of York made an appeal

ple of every religious perſuaſion muſt be ſet free. Though the church of England be ſtrong from its purity, its liberality, and the general character of its miniſters, yet much caution and enquiry are incumbent before ſuch an innovation is aſſented to. At all events I ſhould wiſh the diſcuſſion to be poſtponed till the reſtoration of peace.

When that bleſſing ſhall arrive it is quite uſeleſs to ſurmiſe. I fear that it is ſtill very remote. So many ſerious cauſes of laſting enmity and exaſperation have been accumulated by the government of France againſt this country, that ſignal muſt be the atonement, and vaſt the changes, before any thing like reconciliation can be hoped for. There is ſo much to undo before any thing can be done, even as preliminary to pacification, that the councils and conduct of France muſt be nearly reverſed before we can ever again liſten to propoſals, or conſent to a ceſſation of hoſtile attack. Bonaparte has, throughout his career, ſet ſo completely at defiance every preſcriptive rule of religion, or morals, or law, or temperance, or common decency, that I ſhould be at a loſs to define

to the house, and, on a motion of his own, an exception in his favour was carried by a majority of two. This small majority was a proof of the opinion of the country, and the use which the Duke afterwards made of the indulgence I need not state.

on what principles of union we could be brought to agree.

When the peace of Amiens was conſented to by the blind and yielding adminiſtration of this country, every motive of prudence, policy, or ambition, which can be ſuppoſed to operate on the head or heart of man, ſeemed to enjoin, on the part of the French government, the moſt ſcrupulous obſervance of its terms; yet Bonaparte choſe to break them. Judging, from the humiliating conditions of that treaty, and the eagerneſs with which they had been accepted, that ſuch a diſpoſition could only ariſe from the abſolute neceſſity of the caſe, he conſidered us as a vanquiſhed and proſtrate people. He conſequently thought it no longer requiſite to practiſe diſguiſe, as the more openly he expreſſed his contempt, the more likely was he, in his own opinion, to maintain his ſuperiority. Luckily, however, in this inſtance, the people and the government of this country were at variance, and what the latter would poſſibly without a murmur have ſubmitted to, the former felt the neceſſity of reſenting. It was the deciſive caſt of this ſentiment which exonerated the commonwealth, and firſt rouſed the miniſters from their ſlumbers. Repeated inſults and menaces had fired the blood of a high ſpirited people. They felt the ſtain on their honour; they felt

felt that their independence was endangered, and loudly vociferated for arms. Every incentive ſtimulated their feelings; the actual, the retroſpective, and the proſpective view. They juſtly comprehended the dignified part which they had to ſuſtain. They dwelt on the feats of ancient ſtory; they recollected the power which they had juſt evinced; they beheld concentrated the laurels which, through a long and luminous ſeries of ages, had wreathed their warriors' brows; they recounted the victories of their anceſtors, and thoſe which had been achieved by a living generation; they diſdained the ill-merited concluſions which this minion of fortune had ventured to diſcloſe; and, whilſt they deſpiſed his threats, they reſolved to puniſh his inſolence. Then, and not till then, war was thought of by the government. They were egged on to their duty by the clamours of the nation. They deemed it prudent to yield to the juſt indignation of an injured country; to temporize no longer; but to become the organ of the people's voice.

If ever a war were embarked in with fearful reluctance by a government, or unanimous zeal by a people, it is this. Every pulſe beat in uniſon, and every heart panted for revenge. Inſtead of being deterred from the laſt reſort of power by the empty threat of invaſion, it was this

this very threat which exaſperated us to action. The vivifying warmth of patriotiſm diffuſed itſelf through the land, and every breaſt was penetrated by the genial heat. We were impreſſed with the neceſſity of contention, and with the value of the prize for which we were about to contend. We were convinced that we muſt either forfeit, or preſerve, the accumulated glory and bleſſings of ages. All the ineſtimable advantages which diſtinguiſh this great and free country, and which have grown out of the prudent perſeverance and active labours of many centuries, were now at ſtake. We alſo anticipated in our own ruin, the wreck of laws and governments, and the total diſſolution of religion, morals, and ſocial order, through the civilized world. We felt that we alone had the firmneſs to reſiſt a conſuming fire which was overſpreading Europe, and which, in its fatal and rapid progreſs, was ſweeping away every benefit and ornament of life.

We, therefore, fearleſs of conſequences, girt on the ſword. The gauntlet was thrown down in deſperation: we have taken it up with compoſure. We have accepted the defiance; but the challenger has broken his appointment; and has hitherto ſhrunk from the field. We have ſaved our country: he has involved his more inextricably than ever. Moral evil is the parent of natural

natural evil, and France will long have to mourn the acts of her leaders.

Bonaparte has kept assembled his troops and his gun-boats in formidable array ; but, notwithstanding his repeated declarations to Lord Whitworth, that, whatever might be the consequences, he would head an invading army, their manœuvres and operations, with their vain-glorious general, have been hitherto disgracefully confined to their own shores. Instead of acting the part of a warrior, he has strutted on the stage, with a sweeping train, in the character of a mock Emperor ; and instead of ratifying his pretensions as a commander, has been amusing his gaping and frivolous slaves with pantomimical extravagances and dumb show.

He has, indeed, since his accession to the Imperial dignity, by way of transmitting intelligence to his faithful subjects, condescended to inform them of their happiness and prosperity, of which they, till then, poor souls! had been perfectly ignorant. In this view he was pleased to deliver a speech on the 26th of last December to the Legislative Body ; and likewise, for a similar humane purpose, to order to be read, a few days after, by one of the Presidents of the same enlightened assembly, a paper, called an *exposition* of the present state of France. Now whether the round asser-

tions

tions which theſe ſtrange documents contain be true or falſe, as no one in France will venture to contradict, or even to inveſtigate them, all ideas about their authenticity muſt depend on the opinion entertained of the veracity of their author. Under a free government every meaſure is canvaſſed before the experiment is made, and the ſpirit of enquiry is ſure to detect and expoſe the errors which may attend it. Deſpotiſm, amidſt the fear and ſilence which ſurround it, purſues a different courſe. Abſurd as its acts or ſtatements may be, no one will be found bold enough to reſiſt the one, or to arraign the other. But whether true or falſe, the ſtate papers in queſtion muſt be regarded as a moſt curious production, and every way worthy of having been manufactured by the cabinet of St. Cloud.

In Bonaparte's moſt *gracious* ſpecch from the *throne*, which he addreſſes to the *princes* and others of that auguſt aſſembly, he dwells with exultation on the flouriſhing ſtate of the finances, aſſuring them that no new ſacrifices will be required: (a problem which remains to be demonſtrated;) and, by way of proving his aſſertion, that he has no wiſh of exerciſing a domineering influence, he modeſtly informs them, that he is determined not to relinquiſh what he has already acquired. The anſwers or addreſſes are a worthy corollary to the

imperial oration, in which, they, with true French audacity, impiety, and complaiſance, talk of laws, morals, and religion, in the ſame breath, and no doubt with the ſame veneration and conviction, in which they mention the ſentiments of moderation and peace which have conſtantly animated the moſt profane, inſatiable, and turbulent man of the age.

The *expoſition*, which may be conſidered as an appendix to the imperial ſpeech, is a ſtill more extraordinary compoſition. Contrary however to the rules which are ſo ſtrongly recommended by Horace, it opens at once with a blaze about plots, and conſpiracies, to which ſucceeds a gentle deſcription of internal proſperity. Then comes the proſperity of St. Domingo (not a word about the new Emperor Jacques, who claims ſeniority to Bonaparte,* nor of all the outrages which make the very life-blood run cold, which have deſolated that once-flouriſhing iſland), Martinique, and other colonial poſſeſſions. We are next told that their armies are contented to remain at home; and that their ſeamen are learning tactics in their own

* Deſſalines was crowned Emperor of Hayti on the 13th of October 1804: Bonaparte was crowned at Paris on the 2d of December following.

ports.

ports. The firſt act of this dramatic exhibition is cloſed with the account of a conqueſt (the only one which France has made) over an unarmed and unſuſpicious people with whom ſhe was at profound peace, and whoſe ſecurity was apparently guarantied by the principal continental powers. This tranſaction is deſcanted on with wonderful effect.

The ſecond act opens with a kind of geographical deſcription or analyſis of Europe, which, however, is rather laconically delineated. Spain, we are informed, is at war—other parts are in repoſe. But the manner in which they are alluded to, is a ſort of barometer to Bonaparte's own ſenſations, and enables us to form a tolerably correct judgment of the actual relations which they bear to France.

The Italian and Helvetian republics, the creation of his own power, are moſt laviſhly panegyrized. The Batavian republic, which is not ſo immediately the offspring of his fancy, and which is at laſt beginning to ſhew ſome ſpirit of diſcontent and reſiſtance, is as ſeverely reprimanded. The Emperor of Germany is not recogniſed by that proud title; but, in order to render him ſecondary to Bonaparte, is termed the Emperor of Auſtria; and, whilſt an attempt is made to degrade him from his political conſequence by detaching him from all controul

over the Germanic Body as their ſupreme chief, he is modeſtly counſelled to purſue his commercial arrangements. The ſtates of Germany, ſeparated from their Emperor, are to preſerve their friendly relations with France. The emperor of Ruſſia is alſo adviſed to follow his plans of trade, and to improve the internal economy of his extenſive dominions. The inevitable ruin of Turkey, now no longer an ally of France, is confidently predicted. The Kings of Pruſſia and Denmark are coldly praiſed, and, as for poor Sweden and Naples, they are not even noticed.

From this abridged hiſtory, frivolous and contemptible as it may appear in the outline, we can very plainly gather that Bonaparte is loſing his influence on the continent, and with his influence his temper. The rage and childiſh petulance of his character are continually predominant, and as he ſpeaks with ſeverity, or with favour, or with indifference, of a power, we can pretty nearly trace the degree of political intimacy or alienation which exiſts between that power and France. Thus it is eaſy to perceive, that Pruſſia and Denmark have given offence; that Ruſſia and Turkey are forming alliances elſewhere; that Auſtria is indiſpoſed; that the ſtates of Germany are ſuſpected; and that Naples and Sweden are hoſtile. Of his appendages, that Italy and Switzerland are,

are, for the preſent, quiet ; but that Holland is diſpoſed to revolt. The peroration, which has a ſympathetic connexion with the exordium, concludes with a threat againſt England, but rather leſs rudely delivered than that of laſt year (no doubt from his high rank in the faſhionable world, and the additional poliſh of his auditory) and an aſſurance that France will accept of no conditions but thoſe of the treaty of Amiens. Theſe declarations, like his boaſts of invaſion, are recorded ſentiments ; and, like them, will in all probability be renounced. Bonaparte is ſo much in the habit of breaking his promiſes, and of flying from his engagements, that his declaration, as a declaration, is of little importance. He will eaſily be able to accommodate it to his intereſt, and we ſhall, I truſt, be careful to make him lower his tone.*

To

* On the 4th of February last a second kind of exposition, or report, was made by order of Bonaparte to the Conservative Senate by Talleyrand—to the Legislative Body by Segur, and to the Tribunate by St. Jean d'Angely. The two first were pompous but rather moderate ; but as for the last, it would be difficult to crowd more nonsense, more falsehood, more profaneness, more vulgar abuse, or more fulsome flattery, into a smaller compass. Talleyrand says, that a ten years' state of delay would of all menaces be the most terrible to us—It would certainly be the most convenient for them.

Segur,

To prove indeed, in the outſet, his utter inconſiſtency, a few days after this pompous ſtatement is delivered, he ſends a meſſenger to England with overtures of peace. What, ſo ſoon! even before his hiſtorical, or dramatical, or fabulous compoſition, can be circulated through his own dominions. It muſt be owned that his productions will not ſtand the teſt of criticiſm. They are governed by no rules:—All the unities of Ariſtotle are departed from; there is neither beginning, middle, nor end. But I ſuppoſe the fire of genius is intended to make amends for the wild eccentricities and puerile irregularities with which they abound. But what, in ſoberneſs, or in common ſenſe, are we to think of all theſe g'aring abſurdities and contradictions? The ſword in one hand, the olive in the other; the ſmile of treachery on one cheek, the frown of defiance on the other; excommunications and anathemas,

Segur, although he asserts that France condescends not to return invective, says, a little lower down, that we are the eternal enemy of the liberty of the seas and the tranquillity of nations—and St. Jean d'Angely, among other sagacious discoveries, informs the Tribunate, that France has already overcome three out of four of the chances which obstructed her views. The three overcome are the assembly of her ships, her flotilla, and her men—the fourth, which remains to be overcome, is the *invasion*.

profeſſions

profeſſions of friendſhip and looks of partiality, all huddled together, not offered as alternatives, but preſented at the ſame moment.

And can this man poſſibly imagine, even in the moſt furious paroxiſms of his inſanity, in all the extravagance of his fancy, in the wildneſs of his moſt incoherent ſpeculations, in the ruinous hurry and buſtle of thoſe ſchemes which he is perpetually hatching for the woe of mankind, that we are a people to be again duped by the audaciouſneſs or the ſolemnity of his profeſſions? Can he ſuppoſe that we are ſo very ſimple, ſo very credulous and inexperienced? Can he conceive, that we, who know that his whole life has been a tiſſue of the crueleſt enormities and the baſeſt deceit, under which we have ſo lately ſmarted, will allow ourſelves to be again over-reached by the profligacy or the duplicity of his character? This Proteus, who has aſſumed every ſhape, who has been, by turns, an engineer, a public executioner, a general, a poiſoner, a deſerter, a conſul, an emperor, and an aſſaſſin, and who would now aſſume the mild and beneficent character of a pacificator, can he imagine, that, blazed abroad as his infamy has been in every market town, and village, and hamlet, of this empire, we are again to be gulled by his impoſtures? He has a ſecond time tried his malice; he has a ſecond time eſſayed his power.

power. He has, by every invention and mode, (ſave that of honour) ſought to accompliſh our downfall and deſtruction. But whilſt his own forces have been every where cooped up; whilſt their laurels, their ſtrength, and their patience, are withering in inaction; he has found us abſolutely impregnable. We have been ranging at large, inſulting him in his very ports; and making him retreat from our vengeance.

The conviction of theſe diſgraces is not only ſtamped on his own mind, but is beginning to make a viſible impreſſion on the continental powers. They feel *his* impotence and *our* ſecurity, and from it would at length derive and eſtabliſh their own ſucceſs. They are beginning to take courage, and to grow warm, by our example. They are beginning, properly to underſtand, and duly to appreciate, the real merits of this arch-impoſtor. They are beginning to ſee through the quackeries of this ſtate empiric, who has, for ſo long a time, been amuſing them with his fooleries, whilſt he has been deſtroying them with his drugs. And, above all, they are beginning to comprehend their own intereſts, which are ſo radically adverſe to his, and to which they have hitherto been ſo unaccountably blind.

His Majeſty's ſpeech from the throne, which is one of the moſt ſatisfactory that we have, for a long

long time heard, after dwelling upon various topics, concludes with a moſt animating aſſurance. He informs us, that he is earneſtly diſpoſed for peace, but that no peace can be made without bearing a relation to the continent, with which, if not the ſafety, at leaſt the tranquillity, of this country is ſo intimately blended.

As to *ſecurity*, we have at length, I gueſs, proved even to the dark and ſceptical mind of Bonaparte himſelf, that, independently of every aſſiſtance; that, even with the reſt of Europe leagued againſt us, we can indiſputably command it. On this point we require no ſuccour. The vigour of the country is more than adequate to its defence againſt any force which may be deſperate enough to venture on the experiment of attacking it.

It is, at the ſame time, moſt gratifying and conſolatory to perceive, that the continental powers are, at length, awakening from their deep ſlumbers; that they are about to ſhake off the benumbing torpor by which they have been entranced; and that they are preparing to define limits to the ambition and uſurpation of an inſulting and pernicious tyrant. Bonaparte is raiſed high, but not above the ſtroke of adverſity; and, whilſt his ſycophants are extolling the extent of his power, fortune is perhaps me-

ditating a fatal blow. He ſeems aware of this himſelf. Whilſt he is ſurrounded by his ſatellites, he is dreading the inſurrection of his people, and ſits trembling amidſt the adulation of regal pomp. He is perhaps beginning to diſcover that the weight of a crown is too ponderous for his brow to ſuſtain, and much would he probably give, if he could throw off his crimes with his purple, and deſcend, if not with ſplendid, at leaſt with ſpotleſs, fame, to a private ſtation. He has climbed up to a pinnacle on which he totters, and the precipices which encompaſs him are gaping for their prey. With ſuch fears as theſe to diſturb his nightly reſt, and to derange his waking dreams, he has again had recourſe to the ſhallow expedient of propoſing negotiation. The hope of conciliating the irritated feelings of his degraded ſubjects; of appeaſing the increaſing diſſatisfaction of an incenſed ſoldiery; of ſpreading diſcontent among us, and diſunion among our allies, and thus embarraſſing and enfeebling the councils of this nation, theſe motives have all combined to recommend the late meaſure.

He has thus again ſought to amuſe and delude us by pacific profeſſions. An anſwer has been already returned, conſiſtent with the ſpirit, the dignity, and alſo with the moderation, of this country. He has been informed, that in addition

to

to the ſafety of the Continent, which we ſhall ever regard with jealouſy and becoming intereſt, no further explanation can be entered into, till we have conſulted with thoſe continental powers with whom we are, at preſent, " in confidential intercourſe and connexion." Thus, without the permiſſion of this fooliſh and intemperate boaſter, who was completely to inſulate us; to baniſh us from all concern with continental arrangements; even to cut us off from all political and commercial communion with the reſt of the world; former relations are again ariſing, and people are beginning to be convinced of the benefits of our interference. The energies of this country ſeem fixed under a more vigorous adminiſtration, and Mr. Pitt's illuſtrious name is diffuſing confidence through Europe. Ruſſia is ſpecifically mentioned; Sweden, Pruſſia, and Auſtria are hinted at. Let then the Corſican beware!—

But he has ſolemnly declared, that he will preſerve what he has acquired; and that nothing but the terms of the treaty of Amiens will ſatisfy him. Whilſt he holds this language, accommodation muſt be moſt diſtant from our thoughts. Why talk of peace, if ſuch are to be the preliminary ſtipulations which are to ſerve as the baſis of the conditions which he means to propoſe? This country having reſumed the war in conſequence of his

groſs infraction of every article of that humiliating treaty, is it to be preſumed that we ſhall again agree to thoſe identical terms? After having found our very ſafety endangered from the mode in which his unruly appetency prompted him to diſregard the very ſpirit and letter of that degrading act, are we likely again to commit the ſame deplorable error?

The laſt peace was convenient for him in the higheſt degree, and was, in the ſame degree, perilous for us. It enabled him to follow with full ſecurity his inſidious and ambitious machinations: it reduced us to the humble office of inoffenſpectators. Not ſuch ſpectators as a Britiſh audience uſually conſiſts of, but ſuch as viſit ſights under a deſpotic government, where, if they *cannot* applaud, they *must not* diſapprove, and where the extent of liberty is to condemn in ſilence.

Such was the inſulting accommodation which was required by the French from the Britiſh government. Such was the commanding province which that government both erected and aſſumed. The rule of Bonaparte's deſpotiſm was to extend to every Britiſh heart. His meaſures we were no longer at liberty to canvaſs. Like the Omnipotent, the preſence of his power was to pervade the animal and material world. He was not only to

be

be chief machiniſt, but he was to dive into inferior arrangements. He was not only to produce the effect, but he was to direct every movement, to arrange every pulley, to pull every ſtring. All this was to be ordained and fulfilled according to his fancy, and we, who had paid ſo dearly for the ſpectacle, were to take every thing for granted: we had nothing to do but to look on, to aſſent, or to approve.

How the blood of every Briton kindles at the recollection of theſe galling tranſactions. That we, who have been, and ſtill continue to be, ſo great, ſhould proſtrate ourſelves with ſuch abject humility; that we, who are entrenched to the very ears in honour and glory, who with our fleets and armies, in the remoteſt parts of the globe, were purſuing an uninterrupted career of victory; who were ſtill ſhouting on the very field of battle, ſhould have ſtooped ſo low as to put our hand to that ignominious treaty, is what the future recorder of our annals will with difficulty bring himſelf to credit.

That peace is, however, now completely done away. It is now become a dead letter, and would that it could be blotted out with the pen of indignation from that page which it muſt ever ſully. It will, however, whilſt it continues a memorial of the incapacity of its authors, ſerve as a landmark

mark to future peace-makers. It will, it is to be hoped, inſure us from ſplitting again on the ſame rock. It will induce that mode and meaſure of wary caution, which it will be incumbent on us to obſerve, ſhould it be the future deſtiny of this country to negotiate again with ſuch an opponent.

Bonaparte, by his propoſals, has not given proofs of any increaſed moderation: he has only betrayed his fears. He has diſcloſed, in the trepidation of his heart, all its inward tumultuous thoughts. He has ſhewn that he *really* entertains a very different opinion of this country from that which, during the peace, he ſo furiouſly, ſo indiſcreetly, and ſo indecently declared; and which he ſtill, in ſome degree, profeſſes. He has ſhewn that the hope of ſubjugation is moſt diſtant from his expectations. There is nothing now ſaid about heading armies which were to be ſacrificed one after the other, till he ſucceeded; nothing about overrunning this country *in four-and-twenty hours*. Over theſe ſubjects reigns the ſilence of the grave. All the pleaſant parties, which were to be given at St. James's, from the plunder of the rich, lazy, and fat citizens of London, are apparently completely abandoned. On the contrary, he is obliged to remain, uninvited, at home.

Amidſt all his ſmothered ſilence, he has demonſtrated

monſtrated that he feels, and acutely too, that confinement which we can command, and that chaſtiſement which we can inflict. Six hundred thouſand men in arms, kept in inaction, when that inaction continues too long, and grows out of broken promiſes and diſappointed hopes, become a dreadful incumbrance. Plunder has hitherto kept them together; the want of plunder may urge them to mutiny; and what was raiſed for his defence may prove his ruin.

Confidently as Bonaparte may ſpeak, I can never believe that his language communicates the ſentiments of his heart. A tyrant knows the arts and villainies by which he has himſelf ſucceeded, and dreads the exerciſe of thoſe qualifications in other men. Thus, however he may expect to retain his power through his own precarious life, he can never expect to perpetuate it in his family, or to tranſmit it to his poſterity.

The hiſtory of the French fully proves the neceſſity of controuling them by ſevere regulations, for whenever their chains have been relaxed, they have been guilty of the moſt horrible exceſſes. Their lively ſpirits require occupation, and that diſpoſition which can be delighted with frivolous amuſements, can alſo engage in the moſt deſperate experiments, and perpetrate the moſt infamous crimes. But ſociety cannot remain long in a

forced

forced ſtate: the acts of wickedneſs, and the aberrations of folly, lead back at laſt to that order of things which enforces obedience. The French people, after all their wild and fatal experiments, are at laſt convinced that the ſovereign power muſt be confided to one man. Under this impreſſion, the family of Bourbon muſt inevitably ſucceed to the throne of their anceſtors, and the perſuaſion of this neceſſity of monarchical government, is one of thoſe unintentional benefits which this uſurper has conferred.

We need not, therefore, be haſty in acceding to propoſals, nor, above all, need we ſtoop to conceſſions to this temporary ſcourge. He is convinced of the inſecurity of his ſtation; he knows that he has in the very heart of France thouſands and hundreds of thouſands of enemies, who are thirſting for revenge. He knows that he is a ſtranger to the country which he has enſlaved; without family, without connexions, without dignity, without honour, with nothing but crimes and fortune. He has hitherto been preſerved—ſo have Talleyrand and Sieyes, whoſe wickedneſs and apoſtacy are as rank as thoſe of any victim that has been immolated. But puniſhment, though frequently tardy, generally comes at laſt, and very few are there, among thoſe who were moſt active in the atrocities for which the French Revolution,

throughout

throughout its courſe, has been peculiarly diſtinguiſhed, that have eſcaped a violent end.

Why then ſhould this illuſtrious and powerful country, liſten for an inſtant, to any terms but ſuch as are conſonant with the juſtice of its views, the feelings of its honour, and the ſtability of its ſecurity? Whilſt we reſpect the rights of others, let us tenaciouſly maintain our own. All overtures contrary to the ſpirit of this maxim ſhould be rejected at the very threſhold. We can wait as long as Bonaparte. As long as he can, can we carry on war; and until he formally abandon his preſent avowed intentions, and ſubmit to ſuch ſtipulations as we are entitled to enforce, we can never think of peace.

Peace at all, indeed, with him, who has, in his conduct to others, and, as far as he has been able, to us, broken through every engagement, ſet at defiance every reſtraint, and violated every law, both human and divine, would be an arduous taſk to accompliſh. We cannot rely on his faith, for of that he has none; we cannot depend on his juſtice or his humanity, for of theſe qualities he is totally deſtitute; we cannot expect any thing from the operations of conſcience, for he has proved that its influence is unknown to him. How then are we to act? Why, we muſt chain him down as we would a wild beaſt, which, if we allow

to range beyond his tether, diffuſes alarm, and inflicts death. To place ourſelves beyond the reach of harm, we muſt put it out of his poſſibility to occaſion any. We muſt not, for a moment, confide in his aſſurances or his oath. He has forfeited every claim to this right from a frequent violation of them all. Knowing the extent and virulence of his wiſhes, we can only defeat his object by circumſcribing his means. We muſt therefore reject *his* terms, and inform him of *ours*.

What thoſe terms ſhould exactly be, or how they ſhould be modified, muſt depend on ſo many contingent circumſtances, that, in the preſent unſettled ſtate of continental arrangements, it would be both difficult and uſeleſs to ſuggeſt. But ſo far we may venture to ſay: that they muſt be ſuch as are conſiſtent with the ſafety and honour of a powerful and high-minded people; of a people whom he has inſulted, traduced, and injured, in every way within the ſcope of his faculties; but, at the ſame time, of a people whom, as events have fully manifeſted, he can neither ſubdue nor intimidate; who can moſt ſeriouſly annoy him, but whom he is unable to touch.

The reſtoration of Hanover, and compenſation, as far as compenſation can be made, for the outrages there committed; the complete emancipation of the Ligurian and Helvetian republics; the withdrawing

drawing of the French troops from Holland, and the independence of the Batavian government; all interference in the affairs of Spain, and Portugal, relinquiſhed; the reinſtatement of the king of Sardinia; an apology for the inſults committed againſt our miniſter at Hamburgh, and for the impriſonment of Britiſh ſubjects in France, contrary to the laws of war, or the public rights of civilized nations: theſe muſt be ſome of the leading outlines of future negotiation, and the only baſis on which a peace with this country can be expected to be brought about. They will no doubt to many minds appear extravagant: but they are what I do not deſpair of ſeeing accompliſhed: for, by ſuch means only, can we ſecure to ourſelves the bleſſings of repoſe, or curb the wild and unprincipled extravagance of the new emperor.

With the internal government of France I never thought it wiſe to intermeddle; nor, as far as internal arrangements went, to oppoſe the reigning prejudices and eccentricities of the people. Let them endeavour to ſettle their own affairs. If they chuſe to continue this man as their ruler, in what way, or by what title, little concerns us. The riſk, the ſuffering, and the diſgrace, are their own. They muſt abide the conſequences; and although I am clearly of opinion that nothing but the old family, and, with ſome modifications, the

old order of things, can reſtore tranquillity to France, yet it is better that ſuch a change ſhould be brought about (and ſooner or later it no doubt will) by the operation of their own judgment and conviction than by any external preſſure.

What Europe and particularly ourſelves have to do with France, is to require ſuch a ſtate of things, ſuch a ſyſtem of political action, ſuch a recognition of long-eſtabliſhed and incontrovertible maxims of public law, as ſhall effectually prevent a repetition of thoſe acts of extravagant inſult and aggreſſion which have ſhaken all rules and principles, and which affect to deſpiſe all reſtraint.

Such therefore, or nearly ſuch, are the terms which we have a right to require as an act of juſtice, and which, as an act of duty and power, we are enjoined and may hope to enforce. Above all, let us guard againſt precipitancy. Let thoſe growing ſuſpicions againſt France, and of diſtruſt and hatred to Bonaparte, which are appearing on the continent, take a firm root. Let alſo the revival of that intimate connexion between Great Britain and the leading powers, which has ſo frequently before reſcued Europe from ſlavery, feel its full effects. The people of this country, convinced as they muſt be of the abſurdity and ruin of haſty meaſures, or a premature

peace,

peace, will not, I am ſatisfied, hurry the government in their proceedings by any clamorous ſymptoms of impatience or diſcontent. The experiment of a bad peace has been already made. We have proved that it can only expoſe us to diſhonour and misfortune, and relapſe, after a ſhort time, into a more hazardous rupture. To redeem ourſelves from this intolerable ſtate we have again taken up arms, and, before we again lay them down, we muſt fix our object on a broad and ſecure baſis. Our next act of pacification muſt be either founded on the true ſpirit of amity, or ſo contrived that our enemy ſhall not have the *power*, whatever may be his *will*, of moleſting our repoſe. If we ſwerve from theſe prudential maxims, I ſhall not conſider the country as ſafe—if we ſign another treaty of Amiens, I ſhall conſider the country as loſt.

THE END.

T. Gillet, Printer, Crown-court, Fleet-ſtreet.

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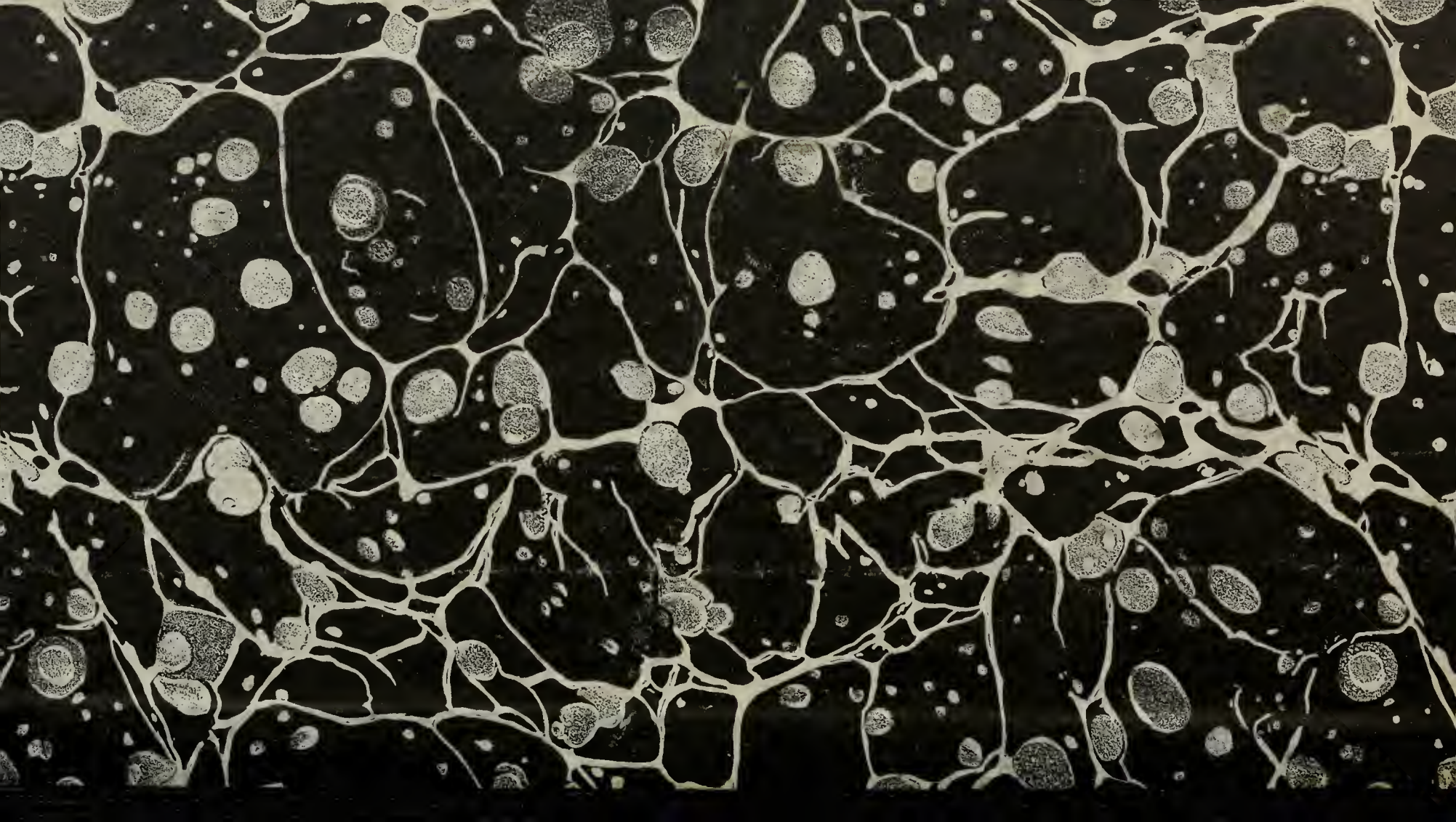
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